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Death toll rises, dozens missing from floods in Japan

By MARI YAMAGUCHI
Associated Press

TOKYO — Soldiers rescued residents on boats as floodwaters flowed down streets in southern Japanese towns hit by deadly rains that were expanding across the region Tuesday. At least 50 people have died and a dozen are missing.

Pounding rain since late Friday in Japan's southern region of Kyushu has triggered widespread flooding. More rain was predicted in Kyushu and the western half of Japan's main island as the rain front moved east.

In Fukuoka, on the northern part of the island, three soldiers waded through knee-high water pulling a boat carrying a mother, her 2-month-old baby and two other residents.

"Good job!" one of the soldiers said as he held up the baby to his chest while the mother got off the boat, Asahi video footage showed. Several children wearing orange life vests over their wet T-shirts arrived on another boat.

SEE FLOODS ON PAGE 4



Kyodo News/AP

Japan Ground Self-Defense Force search for people at the site of a mudslide in Tsunagi town, Kumamoto prefecture, southwestern Japan on Tuesday.

VIRUS OUTBREAK



WILFREDO LEE/AP

Health care workers help each other with their personal protective equipment at a drive-thru coronavirus testing site outside Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Fla., on Sunday. Protective gear is running out again as the virus resumes its rapid spread.

Protective gear for medical workers begins to run low again

By GEOFF MULVIHILL
AND CAMILLE FASSETT
Associated Press

The personal protective gear that was in dangerously short supply during the early weeks of the coronavirus crisis in the U.S. is running low again as the virus resumes its rapid spread and the number of hospitalized patients climbs.

A national nursing union is concerned that gear has to be reused. A doctors association warns that physicians' offices are closed because they cannot get masks and other sup-

plies. And Democratic members of Congress are pushing the Trump administration to devise a national strategy to acquire and distribute gear in anticipation of the crisis worsening in the fall.

"We're five months into this and there are still shortages of gowns, hair covers, shoe covers, masks, N95 masks," said Deborah Burger, president of National Nurses United, who cited results from a survey of the union's members. "They're being doled out, and we're still being told to reuse them."

SEE SUPPLY ON PAGE 7

'We're five months into this and there are still shortages of gowns, hair covers, shoe covers, masks, N95 masks. They're being doled out, and we're still being told to reuse them.'

Deborah Burger
president of National Nurses United

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Uber buys Postmates in \$2.65 billion deal

By Matt Ott
and Cathy Bussewitz
Associated Press

SILVER SPRING, Md. — Uber has widened its reach in the fiercely competitive delivery market by acquiring Postmates in a \$2.65 billion all-stock deal, the company said Monday.

The acquisition enables the ride-hailing giant to increase its delivery offerings at a time when the global pandemic has suppressed customers' desire for

rides while boosting home delivery needs. While Uber's meal delivery business, Uber Eats, has mostly focused on restaurants, Postmates delivers a wider array of goods including groceries, pharmacy items, alcoholic drinks and party supplies.

"The vision for us is to become an everyday service," said Dara Khosrowshahi, CEO of Uber, in a conference call with investors Monday. "Postmates is a great step along that vision. Anyplace you want to go, anything you want

delivered to your home, Uber is going to be there with you, and we think these everyday frequent interactions create a habit, create a connection with customers.

Uber will gain ground against DoorDash, which controls about 44% of the U.S. meal delivery market, according to May figures from Second Measure, a data analysis company. That's compared with Uber Eats' 23% share before the Postmates deal. Postmates had about 8% of the market.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (July 8)	\$1.10
Dollar buys (July 8)	€0.8630
British pound (July 8)	\$1.22
Japanese yen (July 8)	105.00
South Korean won (July 8)	1,162.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.2553
Canada (Dollar)	1.3577
China (Yuan)	7.0193
Denmark (Krone)	6.6031
Egypt (Pound)	16.0398
Euro	\$1.1285/0.8861
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7502
Hungary (Forint)	313.83
Israel (Shekel)	3.4558
Japan (Yen)	107.66
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3081
Norway (Krone)	9.4321
Philippines (Peso)	49.50
Poland (Zloty)	3.96
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7509
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3542
South Korea (Won)	1,194.22

Switzerland (Franc)	0.9424
Thailand (Baht)	31.21
Turkey (Lira)	6.8657

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	0.25
Federal funds market rate	0.08
3-month bill	0.15
30-year bond	1.44

WEATHER OUTLOOK

WEDNESDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



WEDNESDAY IN EUROPE



THURSDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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MILITARY

Pentagon mulls ban on Confederate flags

By MISSY RYAN
AND ALEX HORTON
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Pentagon leaders are considering a ban on Confederate flags at all bases, an official said Monday, in another possible step in the military's reckoning with racism and its long acceptance of Civil War tributes.

The official said the draft policy being considered at the Pentagon's highest levels would build on recent moves by military services to bar Confederate symbols on facilities they control and, if approved, would represent the first Defense Department-wide prohibition of such iconography.

The official spoke on the condi-

tion of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations. A Pentagon spokesman declined to comment on the proposed change, which was first reported by CNN.

The Pentagon's consideration of the new policy comes as some state and local leaders, along with colleges, universities and organizations, take steps to address the legacy of the Civil War, slavery and racism, removing statues of Confederate leaders from public spaces and renaming institutions honoring officials linked to racist policies.

Last month, Mississippi's governor signed a bill changing the state flag. NASCAR has banned the flag.

The moves in some cases have taken on partisan tones, with

President Donald Trump decrying NASCAR's flag ban and vowing to veto an annual defense bill if it includes a Democratic proposal to change the names of military bases honoring Confederate leaders.

Those proposals come amid a nationwide reckoning that began with the death of George Floyd, a Black man, in Minneapolis police custody in May.

A Pentagon ban could also exacerbate strains between Pentagon leaders and Trump caused by the military's involvement in responding to recent civil unrest. Since then, Defense Secretary Mark Esper and military leaders have scrambled to illustrate their responsiveness to a newly open conversation about race.

Military bases generally are not decorated with Confederate flags. Many barracks and homes on post carry the U.S. flag, service-specific banners, the colors of service academies or sports teams and college teams. The Confederate flag can more often be found on T-shirts, service members' tattoos, bumper stickers or banners hanging inside a barracks.

Last month, the Marine Corps ordered the identification and removal of Confederate flag symbols in public and work spaces; the Navy has signaled it is moving to do the same.

The Marine Corps ban applies to mugs, bumper stickers, banners, posters and more. But it stops short of prohibiting the

symbol inside barracks rooms and homes and on personal bags and vehicles.

While the Army, the largest military branch, has previously resisted pressure to rename its 10 bases honoring Confederate commanders, saying in 2017 that such moves would be "controversial and divisive," officials have said in recent weeks that Army leaders are now open to at least discussing the issue.

The installations, all in former Confederate states, were named with input from influential locals in the Jim Crow era.

The Army courted their approval because it needed large swaths of land to build sprawling bases during the buildups of World Wars I and II.

US planning to sell 6 Black Hawk helicopters to Lithuania

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The U.S. plans to sell six UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to Lithuania to boost allied quick response capabilities in a region regarded by some security analysts as one of NATO's most vulnerable.

The deal, which will also include a full stock of related Black Hawk gear and weaponry such as M240H machine guns and missile warning systems, is worth \$380 million, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency said in a statement Monday.

The Black Hawks will help Lithuania support U.S. and NATO forces' rapid response to a variety of missions and quick positioning of troops with minimal helicopter assets," the statement said.

The deal was announced as Lithuania modernizes its armed forces, and one year after the former Soviet republic entered into a new security agreement with the U.S. that calls for closer defense cooperation.

"The proposed sale of these UH-60 helicopters to Lithuania will significantly increase its capability to

provide troop lift, border security, anti-terrorist, medical evacuation, search and rescue, re-supply/external lift, combat support in all weather," the agency said.

Lithuania, which shares borders with the militarized Russian exclave of Kaliningrad to the south and Russia's strategic partner of Belarus to the east, is considered by many security analysts to be one of NATO's most exposed members.

Of particular concern is a 40-mile stretch of land along Lithuania's border with Poland, known as the Suwalki Gap, which, if seized by Russian forces in the event of a conflict, could result in the three Baltic states being cut off from the rest of the alliance.

NATO in recent years has added multinational battle groups in Lithuania and the other Baltic states, Latvia and Estonia, as well as in Poland, to act as deterrents against potential Russian aggression.

The battle group in northeastern Poland is led by the U.S., and is particularly focused on security around the Suwalki Gap.

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CHARLES ROSEMOND/U.S. Army

A U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade from Fort Hood, Texas, conducts a training flight in 2018 at Katterbach Airfield, Germany.

Drive-by shooting hits Virginia Beach military housing

By KATHERINE HAFNER
The (Norfolk, Va.) Virginian-Pilot

Kristianne Parren was tired and ready for bed early Sunday when an explosion-like sound erupted in her Virginia Beach home.

It was shortly after 1 a.m. in the Sandpiper Crescent Lincoln Military Housing complex off Shore Drive, and she and her husband had just finished moving a television into their master bedroom, she told *The Virginian-Pilot* on Monday. Her husband, Nicholas, was putting away his handgun as he does every night when the shooting started.

"I thought he had dropped his firearm and it exploded or some-

thing," said Parren, 22. "As soon as he put it away gunshots started going off throughout the house."

Bullets sprayed through the front of the home, reaching several rooms including the living room, master bedroom and the bedroom where the Parrens' 8-month-old daughter, Mabel, lay asleep in her crib.

Parren said she was caught in "absolute terror." She ran and grabbed her daughter and her phone in another room to call 911. A cellphone video Parren took the next day shows at least 10 bullet holes, marked with evidence letters by police, in Mabel's room. The closest was about a foot away from the crib.

Other holes mark walls in ad-

joining rooms.

No one was injured, Parren said. She said Virginia Beach police told her that the intended target had been a neighbor's car.

"It wasn't a handgun. It was a rifle, and a pretty decently high-powered one," she said. Linda Kuehn, spokeswoman for the Virginia Beach Police Department, confirmed officers were called to the 5000 block of Gunter Street at 1:08 a.m. but did not immediately have more information.

Parren said she and her husband, who's a sailor based at Naval Station Norfolk, have until September on their lease with Lincoln, but that they cannot live at the complex anymore.

"There's bullet holes next to a baby's crib. Our family is going through a traumatic experience," she said. "This shouldn't have happened in military housing."

She added that the shooting is a final straw on top of multiple service requests over the past several years going unaddressed, regarding wasps and a creature living in the roof.

Brooke Scarbrough, a Lincoln Military Housing spokeswoman, said the residents notified the complex of the shooting Monday morning and while police are leading the investigation, "we are working diligently with them alongside our Navy Partner to ensure the impacted families are taken care of and supported."

Corrections

■ A July 7 story about the USS McCampbell departing Japan for a refit in the United States incorrectly identified the ship's unit. It belongs to Destroyer Squadron 15.

■ A July 3 Washington Post story about the Army soldiers under the command of then-1st Lt. Clint Lorange, who was convicted of second-degree murder for ordering his troops to fire on civilians in Afghanistan and pardoned by President Donald Trump, misstated the name of Lorange's forthcoming book. It is "Stolen Honor," not "Stolen Valor."

MILITARY

N. Korea says no to nuke talks as US envoy arrives

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea insisted Tuesday that it has “no intention” of resuming dialogue with the United States as the Trump administration’s main point man on the issue traveled to the region to try to revive nuclear talks.

Stephen Biegun, deputy secretary of state and special representative for North Korea, planned to meet with senior South Korean and Japanese officials during a four-day trip that began with his arrival Tuesday on Osan Air Base.

He planned to discuss cooperation with both allies on a range of issues “and further strengthen coordination on the final, fully verified denuclearization” of North Korea, according to the State Department.

Biegun’s visit comes days after South Korean President Moon Jae-in suggested the U.S. and North Korean leaders meet again before U.S. presidential elections are held in November.

North Korea rejected the idea, calling Moon a “meddlesome man,” in its second such message in less than a week.

“Explicitly speaking once again, we have no intention to sit face to face with the U.S.,” Kwon Jong Gun, head of the North Korean Foreign Ministry’s department of U.S. affairs, said Tuesday in a statement posted on the state-run Korean Central News Agency.

He also mocked the South Koreans for trying to mediate between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim

Jong Un.

“They seem to have a bad ear or are guided by the habit of always talking in their own favor,” he said.

On Saturday, the North’s first vice minister of foreign affairs, Choe Son Hui, also dismissed the idea of another summit, accusing Washington of using talks as a distraction from Trump’s domestic political woes.

“It is clear to us, even without meeting, with what shallow trick the U.S. will approach us as it has neither intention nor will to go back to the drawing board,” she was quoted as saying by KCNA.

Trump and Kim have met three times to discuss U.S.-led efforts to persuade the communist state to abandon its nuclear weapons program.

However, talks stalled last year after the two sides failed to agree on the North’s demands for sanctions relief in exchange for a step-by-step disarmament process.

Biegun expressed optimism last week that progress could still be made but acknowledged a summit was unlikely due to the coronavirus pandemic.

When asked about possible engagement between Trump and Kim, he said, “I think that’s probably unlikely between now and the U.S. election as we see events being canceled around the world.”

Biegun was to meet with South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha and other officials on Wednesday and to travel to Japan on Thursday, according to the foreign ministry.

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PHOTOS BY KOTA ENDO, KYODO NEWS/AP

Debris is scattered in a residential area hit by heavy rain in Kumamuro, Kumamoto prefecture, southern Japan, on Tuesday. Rain threatened wider areas of the main island of Kyushu.

Floods: Mud, debris hamper rescue workers

FROM FRONT PAGE

An older woman told NHK television she started walking down the road to evacuate, but floodwater rose quickly up to her neck. Another woman said, “I was almost washed away and had to grab an electrical pole.”

The Fire and Disaster Management Agency said 49 victims were from riverside towns in the Kumamoto prefecture. Another of the dead confirmed as of Tuesday morning was a woman in her 80s found inside her flooded home in another prefecture.

About 3 million residents were advised to evacuate across Kyushu, Japan’s third-largest island.

Tens of thousands of army troops, police and other rescue workers mobilized from around the country worked their way through mud and debris in the hardest-hit riverside towns along the Kuma River. Rescue operations have been hampered by the floodwater and continuing harsh weather.

In Kuma village in the hardest-hit Kumamoto prefecture, dozens of residents took shelter at a park. The roofed structure had no walls



A boy walks along debris piled up at the side of a road in Hitoyoshi city, Kumamoto prefecture.

or floor and they sat on blue tarps spread on the dirt ground, with no partitions. The village office’s electricity and communications had been cut.

Among the victims were 14 residents of a nursing home next

to the Kuma River, known as the “raging river” because it is joined by another river just upstream and is prone to flooding. Its embankment fell, letting water gush into the nursing home.

Paratrooper pleads not guilty to charges in neo-Nazi plot

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

An Italy-based paratrooper pleaded not guilty this week to charges he conspired with a satanic neo-Nazi group to help plot an ambush on his own unit during a planned deployment to Turkey.

Ethan Melzer, 22, entered the plea Monday before U.S. Magistrate Judge Sarah Netburn in Manhattan at a virtual hearing, court records show.

The six charges he faces include conspiring to kill U.S. nationals and conspiring and attempting to murder U.S. service members, which each carry a maximum sentence of life in prison. He is also charged with providing support to terrorists.

Prosecutors accused Melzer, a private serving with the Vicenza-based 173rd Airborne Brigade, of using an encrypted app to send sensitive details about his unit’s loca-

tions, movements and security to members of the extremist groups the Order of the Nine Angles, or O9A, and the “RapeWaffen Division.”

He was motivated by hatred to orchestrate “this ultimate act of betrayal,” Audrey Strauss, acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, said in a statement announcing Melzer’s indictment last month.

A native of Louisville, Ky., Melzer enlisted in the Army in 2018 and joined O9A in 2019, around the time he was stationed in Italy. The indictment said He began planning a “jihad attack” in April, after he and others in his unit were told they would deploy to an unnamed base in Turkey, it said.

O9A, formed decades ago in the United Kingdom, has espoused violent, white supremacist, anti-Semitic and satanist beliefs. The group has also expressed support for Osama bin Laden and other radical Islamic

jihadis, and hopes to “usher in a new imperial aeon (age) ruled by a race of Satanic supermen,” the London-based advocacy group Hope Not Hate has said.

In one message to unnamed group members, Melzer wrote that a lack of heavy weapons and machine guns at the base in Turkey meant “every fire-team is essentially crippled,” a federal complaint said. An attack from nearby mountains could “panic the s--- outta” the troops, another chat participant said, according to the filing.

An infantryman with 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, Melzer wanted the attack to cause a mass casualty incident, which he hoped would spur a war in Turkey, even if the ambush resulted in his own death, one message said. He also said he “wouldn’t mind” if the group found someone to “stir something up” in Italy and claimed to have had contacts with several Islamic State members in France — some

he claimed had since been killed.

FBI agents also found ISIS propaganda on Melzer’s online cloud storage describing attacks and murder of U.S. personnel, the complaint said.

Federal officials foiled Melzer’s plot and arrested him on May 30 at Caserma Ederle in Vicenza, Italy, home to U.S. Army Garrison Italy and U.S. Army Africa.

In a recorded interview with FBI and military officials at that time, Melzer confessed that he wanted to kill as many of his fellow soldiers as possible, the complaint stated. He considered himself a traitor and his actions treason, court filings said, citing the interview.

Melzer is being held at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan. Public defenders representing him did not respond to a request for comment about his plea.

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MILITARY



Mobius/Wikimedia Commons

About 200 police were dispatched to break up July 4th festivities on Haeundae beach in Busan, South Korea, after receiving more than 70 complaints about fireworks and other unruly behavior by U.S. service members.

US troops accused of wreaking havoc at beach party in S. Korea

BY KIM GAMEL AND YOO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The U.S. military expressed regret for “disruptive behavior” Tuesday after American troops allegedly caused a ruckus during a Fourth of July party that included fireworks on a popular beach in the southern city of Busan.

About 200 police were dispatched to break up the festivities Saturday on Haeundae Beach in Busan after receiving more than 70 complaints from residents.

One soldier was briefly detained and fined for a misdemeanor after throwing a firework in the direction of police, then trying to flee the scene, the public affairs office at the Busan Metropolitan Police Agency said.

Two traffic accidents and a drunken driving case involving soldiers also were reported in the area Saturday.

“The foreigners were setting off fireworks, sparklers and so on along the path leading to the beach, even throwing some toward people,” a police official said, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with department policy.

“They also installed speakers and played loud music. They clogged up the road, did not make way for cars and flipped folks off.”

U.S. Forces Korea said it was aware of disruptive behavior and poor conduct reports in Busan and promised to cooperate with South Korean law enforcement authorities to identify those responsible.

“We regret the inconvenience and disruption this

behavior caused the people of Busan,” the command said in a statement.

It called the behavior “deeply troubling” and not representative of “the strong respect we hold for the Korean people, their culture, laws and regulations.”

“All commanders will take appropriate action for those service members determined to be involved in this type of behavior,” it said. “USFK remains committed to being good neighbors with our host nation and maintaining a strong [South Korea]-U.S. alliance.”

The statement was issued after civic groups held rallies in Seoul and Busan, denouncing the troops’ actions and calling for an apology.

The military enjoyed a four-day weekend for Independence Day, but with troops and their families barred by coronavirus restrictions from traveling outside the country, many headed to local beaches instead.

Rowdy troop behavior on beaches also has been a problem in nearby Japan.

The commander of Naval Base Sasebo, Capt. Brad Stallings, said last week that members of the military community had recently caused problems at Shirahama Beach, leaving trash and playing loud music that offended local nationals.

“We are going to start checking the beach periodically to ensure members of the base community aren’t misbehaving there,” Stallings said in a Facebook post on June 29. “If another incident happens, the beach will be secured.”

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Body recovered of Marine missing at sea in Japan

BY JAMES BOLINGER
AND HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — Searchers on Sunday recovered the body of a Marine who likely drowned days earlier while going to the aid of two other swimmers.

Sgt. Tyler M. Rankin, 24, of Kansas City, Mo., disappeared Thursday off the coast of Hamada Beach in Shimane prefecture, according to a statement Tuesday from Marine Aircraft Group 12. He was a KC-130 Hercules mechanic assigned to Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 152 at MCAS Iwakuni.

The Japan Coast Guard and local authorities responded immediately Thursday to a call of someone drowning about 11 a.m. near the Iwami Kahin campground, according to the coast guard and the Marine statement.

About 20 people affiliated with the base were visiting the beach that morning, a coast guard spokesman said. Rankin went missing after he swam out to rescue two men from the group, who were swept offshore.

The sea had swells of up to nearly 10 feet at the time of the incident, along with strong winds, the spokesman said. It’s customary in Japan for some government officials to speak to the media on condition of anonymity.

Marines of Rankin’s squadron — nicknamed the Sumos — “mourn the loss of their brother at arms,” Lt. Col. Christopher Kocab, the squadron’s commander, said in Tuesday’s statement. “Sgt. Rankin was a true leader within the squadron, a subject matter expert within his field, and a great friend to many. We send our heartfelt condolences to all of Tyler’s family and close friends and will never forget the impact he left on all of us.”

Rankin joined the Marine Corps in 2014, the statement said. His awards include the Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation Ribbon, National Defense Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal and Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

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US airman accused of drunken driving, leaving accident scene

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — An airman assigned to Kadena Air Base ended his Independence Day under arrest on accusations that he drove while drunk and left the scene of an accident, according to Okinawa police.

Staff Sgt. Tavarus M. Trotty, 24, was taken into custody after a taxi driver reported that he had struck another vehicle at 5:35 a.m. and then left the area, a spokesman for the Urasoe Police Station said Tuesday. The driver followed Trotty, whom police arrested an hour later when he stopped not far from the accident scene.

Trotty injured his forehead, which struck the windshield, and also suffered a minor cut when he hit the other car, according to the spokesman. It’s customary in Japan for some government officials to speak to the media on condition of anonymity.

The spokesman said the driver whose car Trotty allegedly struck suffered no injuries. Police did not detail the extent of damage to

either vehicle or Trotty’s speed.

A breath test by police measured Trotty’s blood alcohol content at twice Japan’s legal limit of 0.03%, according to the spokesman. By comparison, all 50 U.S. states have set 0.08 as the legal limit for driving under the influence or driving while impaired.

Trotty was still in custody Tuesday morning, the spokesman said. His case, which remains under investigation, was referred to the Naha District Public Prosecutors Office on Sunday, the spokesman said. The charges are driving under the influence and failing to report an accident.

Kadena’s 18th Wing did not immediately respond to requests for comment Tuesday.

Driving under the influence may result in up to three years in prison or up to \$4,672 in fines, according to Japan’s Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. Failing to report an accident may result in up to three months in prison or up to \$467 in fines.

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Soldier dies in noncombat incident in Kosovo

Stars and Stripes

An Oregon National Guard soldier has died while supporting the Operation Joint Guardian peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, the Pentagon announced Monday evening.

Pfc. Alexander Blake Klass, 20, of Willamina, Ore., died Saturday “as the result of a noncombat related incident,” a statement said. The death, which happened at Camp Novo Selo near Vushtrri in the northern part of the country, is under investigation.

Klass was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team out of Springfield, Ore., the statement said.

No other information was available.

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PACIFIC

Army mounts first large-scale drill since pandemic hit

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — Roughly 5,500 soldiers with the 25th Infantry Division will join the annual Lightning Forge exercise in Hawaii beginning Tuesday, the division's first large-scale training since the coronavirus pandemic hit in the spring.

The exercise runs through July 21 and will be held in training areas across the island of Oahu, according to an Army statement on Friday.

The division began a gradual return to group training in early May as new cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, began tapering off.

"During this time of COVID-19, and as our country continues a gradual return to normal, the need for the Army to maintain a mission-ready force is more important than ever," Maj. Gen. James Jarrard, the division commander, said in the statement.

"Just as we approached the COVID-19 crisis, our approach to Exercise Lightning Forge will be transparent, thoughtful, and deliberate, with the health safety of our soldiers, families, and com-

munity our top priority," he said. As of Tuesday, Hawaii had 1,030 verified cases of the virus, with 19 deaths, according to the state Department of Health. Recent weeks have seen an increase in daily new cases, often in the double digits.

The state has gradually eased a stringent stay-at-home order issued in early April, but new cases in June were about six times higher than those in May.

In response, Kirk Caldwell, mayor of the city and county of Honolulu, on Thursday expanded a mandate requiring face masks be worn in all indoor public spaces — including workplaces that do not deal with the public — and in outdoors areas where physical distancing is not possible.

The Army has generally abided by county and state orders regarding the pandemic, but it remains undecided how, or if, the mask order will be implemented on Oahu's two Army bases, Schofield Barracks and Fort Shafter.

"Army leadership is reviewing the city and county requirements, but all personnel must follow the requirements when going off base," Col. Tom Barrett, commander of Army Garrison



MICHAEL BRADLE/U.S. Army

A soldier with the 25th Infantry Division assembles an M240 at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, on June 25 during preparation for the Lightning Forge exercise that runs through July 21.

Hawaii, said in a Facebook video Thursday.

The Lightning Forge training will focus on the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, with support personnel drawn from across the division.

About 150 infantry soldiers from the Royal Thai Army's 3rd Infantry Division will join the

exercise.

Training sites include Schofield Barracks, the East Range, Dillingham Army Airfield, the Kahuku Training Area and Baseline Drop Zone.

Lightning Forge prepares a brigade combat team each year for a training rotation at the U.S. Army's Joint Readiness Training

Center in Fort Polk, La.

Two large-scale helicopter operations will be conducted near Dillingham Army Airfield on Wednesday and Thursday.

The Army has advised Oahu residents slow-moving military convoys could affect traffic flow.

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Okinawa base shelters in place after a few positive tests

By DAVE ORNAUER
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The U.S. military ordered personnel at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma on Okinawa to shelter in place Tuesday after "several" people there tested positive for the coronavirus.

The order, issued via a mass email alert by Marine Corps Installations Pacific, took

effect at 2:49 p.m. and was lifted about four hours later.

Those who tested positive have been moved into isolation, along with their close contacts, according to a Marine Corps statement issued Tuesday evening. It did not say how many are infected or whether they are on active duty.

"At this time, the source of exposure is unknown," the statement said. "Military leadership and health professionals have employed a contact tracing team to deter-

mine any additional potential exposures."

There has been no change in the health-protection level for installations on Okinawa, which remain at "moderate" risk, according to an email from Marine spokesman 1st Lt. Timothy Hayes.

"We are taking all prudent measures to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 and will continue to communicate with our forces, our families and our local Okinawan communities openly," the Marine statement said.

The infections were announced less than a week after the Marine Corps reported its first coronavirus case on Okinawa, a family member of a Marine who tested positive July 1 after returning from the United States.

That case was the first on the island prefecture since April 30.

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State Department approves sale of Ospreys to Indonesia

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

The State Department has approved the sale of eight MV-22 Osprey tiltrotor aircraft to Indonesia, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency announced Monday.

The announcement comes as Japan prepares to deploy its first of 17 Ospreys to Camp Kisarazu, a Japan Ground Self-Defense Force airfield in Chiba Prefecture.

The total cost to Indonesia for the helicopter/airplane hybrids along with related equipment is estimated at \$2 billion, the agency said in a statement.

The sale includes 24 Rolls Royce engines,

infrared radars, missile warning systems, multi-band radios, airborne GPS, machine guns and various other equipment along with software, training for personnel and U.S. government and contractor engineering, logistics and technical support, the statement said.

Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation with territory spread across more than 17,000 islands, employs a large fleet of conventional military aircraft for disaster relief and in a decadeslong fight against Islamic extremists. Like several other Southeast Asia nations, Indonesia claims South China Sea territory that is also claimed by China.

"This proposed sale will support the foreign policy goals and national security objectives of the United States by improving the security of an important regional partner that is a force for political stability, and economic progress in the Asia-Pacific region," the agency's statement said. "It is vital to U.S. national interest to assist Indonesia in developing and maintaining a strong and effective self-defense capability."

The proposed sale will enhance Indonesia's humanitarian and disaster relief capabilities and support amphibious operations, the statement added.

Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono

said during a press conference Tuesday that his nation's first Osprey was scheduled to arrive at the base Monday, but its delivery was delayed by bad weather. The aircraft would travel to Kisarazu "hereafter" weather permitting, he said.

U.S. forces in the Far East include Air Force CV-22 Ospreys stationed at Yokota Air Base, Tokyo, and Kadena Air Base, Okinawa. The Marine Corps has flown Ospreys out of Okinawa since 2012.

Stars and Stripes reporter Hana Kusumoto contributed to this report.
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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Supply: Association says its nursing homes received unusable items from FEMA

FROM FRONT PAGE

When the crisis first exploded in March and April in hot spots such as New York City, the situation was so desperate that nurses turned plastic garbage bags into protective gowns. The lack of equipment forced states and hospitals to compete against each other, the federal government and other countries in desperate, expensive bidding wars.

In general, supplies of protective gear were more robust now, and many states and major hospital chains say they are in better shape. But medical professionals and some lawmakers have cast doubt on those improvements as shortages begin to reappear.

Dr. Aisha Terry, an associate professor of emergency medicine at George Washington University in Washington, said that she has good access to PPE, but some non-academic and rural health facilities have much less.

"I think overall, production, distribution and access has improved," Terry said. "But the fear is that we will become complacent" and allow supplies to dwindle in some places.

In a letter to Congress last week, the health department in DuPage County, Ill., near Chicago, said all hospitals in the county are reusing protective gear "in ways that were not originally intended and are probably less safe than the optimal use of PPE."

The DuPage County department is a supplier of last resort that steps in when facilities have less than two weeks' worth of gear. As of Monday, it had only nine days of some supplies at the current request level. A rise in new infections could make the supply go much faster.

The American Medical Association wrote to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Vice President Mike Pence and members of Congress calling for a coordinated national strategy to buy and allocate gear.

Rep. Carolyn Maloney, a New York Democrat, released a memo

last week ahead of a congressional committee hearing that raised concerns about looming problems in the supply chain. Her report was based on interviews with unnamed employees at medical supply companies, one of whom warned that raw material for gowns is not available at any price in the amounts needed, leading to an "unsustainable" situation.

Rear Adm. John Polowczyk, who is in charge of coronavirus-related supplies for the White House, told Congress last week that more than one-fourth of the states have less than a 30-day supply.

"It would seem like in less than 30 days, we're going to have a real crisis," said Rep. Bill Foster, an Illinois Democrat.

FEMA, which manages the nation's stockpile, would not break down which states have enough gear to last beyond 30 days and which do not. In June, the government started replenishing its once-depleted stockpile with the goal of building up a two-month supply.

As of June 10, FEMA had distributed or directed private companies to distribute more than 74 million N95 masks and 66 million pairs of gloves, along with other gear. The agency said it changed its distribution method to send more equipment to hot spots.

Although all U.S. states and territories have received some protective gear from FEMA, an Associated Press analysis of the agency's own data found that the amounts varied widely when measured by population and the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases.

The AP analysis found that low-population, mostly rural states received the largest FEMA allocations per confirmed case. As of mid-June, for example, Montana had received 1,125 items of protective gear per case, compared with 32 items per case in Massachusetts, an early hot spot. States including California, Iowa

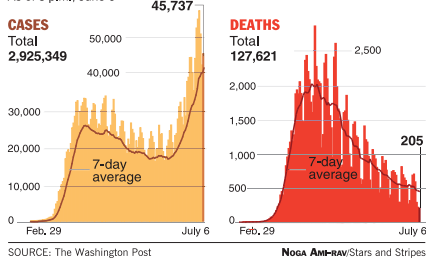


LYNNE SLADKY/AP

A health care worker carries a stack of clipboards at a COVID-19 testing site at the Martin Luther King Jr. Clinica Campesina Health Center on Monday in Homestead, Fla.

New coronavirus cases and deaths in the US, by day

As of 8 p.m., June 6



and Nebraska, all of which have seen a surge in confirmed infections, received among the lowest amounts of protective gear from FEMA per case, according to the AP analysis.

Many states say the federal

supplies make up a small part of their stockpiles after they spent millions of dollars to acquire equipment on their own.

Concerns extend beyond the amount of gear. In New Hampshire, an association representing

nursing homes said most items sent by FEMA in early June were unusable, including child-size gloves, surgical masks with ear loops that broke when stretched and isolation gowns with no arm openings.

A nonprofit group called #GetUsPPE was established in March by physicians to help distribute donated protective gear.

The group had a 200% increase in requests during the last two weeks of June from medical providers in Texas, a state with a big surge in confirmed virus cases. State officials there have said their supplies are adequate.

"We anticipated that we would need to be around for a few weeks until someone else stepped in and solved this problem," said Dr. Megan Ranney, an emergency physician at Rhode Island Hospital who was among the group's founders. "Here we are, still getting hundreds of thousands of requests a week."

Brazil's President Bolsonaro tests positive for COVID-19

Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro said Tuesday he has tested positive for COVID-19 after months of downplaying the virus's severity.

Bolsonaro, 65, confirmed the test results while wearing a mask and speaking to reporters in the capital, Brasilia, and said he is already taking hydroxychloroquine — an anti-malarial unproven to effectively treat COVID-19.

"I'm well, normal. I even want to take a walk around here, but I can't due to medical recommendations," Bolsonaro said. "I



Bolsonaro

thought I had it before, given my very dynamic activity. I'm president and on the cover of the magazine. I like to be in the middle of the people."

The populist has often appeared in public to shake hands with supporters and mingle with crowds, at times without a mask. He has said that his history as an athlete would protect him from

the virus, and that it would be nothing more than a "little flu" were he to contract it. He also repeatedly said that there is no way to prevent 70% of the population falling ill with COVID-19, and that local authorities' measures to shut down economic activity would ultimately cause more hardship than allowing the virus to run its course.

Bolsonaro on Tuesday repeated those sentiments, comparing the virus to a rain that will fall on most people, and that some, like the elderly, must take greater care.

"You can't just talk about the

consequences of the virus that you have to worry about. Life goes on. Brazil needs to produce. You need to get the economy in gear," he said.

Cities and states last month began lifting restrictions that had been imposed to control the spread of the virus, as their statistical curves of deaths began to decline along with the occupation rate of its intensive-care units. Brazil, the world's sixth most populous nation, with more than 210 million people, is one of the global hot spots of the pandemic.

Bolsonaro said he has canceled a trip to the northeast region that

was planned for this week. He will continue working via videoconference and receive rare visitors when he needs to sign a document, he said.

The president underwent an X-ray of his lungs Monday after experiencing fever, muscle aches and malaise, he told reporters. As of Tuesday, his fever had subsided, he said, and attributed the improvement to hydroxychloroquine, which he has promoted despite growing medical consensus it does not combat COVID-19. He stepped back from the journalists and removed his mask at one point to show that he looks well.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Study: Benefits of aid extended beyond needy

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
AND JOYCE M. ROSENBERG
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The government on Monday identified roughly 650,000 mostly small businesses and nonprofits that received taxpayer money through a federal program that was designed to soften job losses from the coronavirus but also benefited wealthy, well-connected companies and celebrity owned firms.

The Treasury Department's Payroll Protection Program approved applicants from a broad swath of industries. Some that were less directly impacted by the pandemic, such as manufacturing and construction, received a greater proportion of the loans than the hard-hit restaurant and hotel industries. Many law firms and private equity companies also obtained loans.

Businesses owned by politicians also borrowed from the program, including a minor league baseball team owned by the family of the governor of Ohio. A large franchisee of Wendy's, Taco Bell and Pizza Hut restaurants, whose CEO is a major donor to President Donald Trump, received loans totaling \$15 to \$30 million.

Other recipients included Kanye West's clothing and sneaker brand Yeezy, Ice Cube's professional basketball league, Planned Parenthood clinics in more than two dozen states, the nonprofit arm of the anti-tax group headed by Grover Norquist, Americans for Tax Reform, as well as Rosenblatt Securities, one of the biggest names on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

As of June 30, the program had handed out \$521 billion. The Treasury Department identified just a fraction of the borrowers Monday, naming companies that got more than \$150,000. Those firms made up less than 15% of the nearly 5 million small entities that received loans.

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and chairmen of the Small Business Committee that crafted the program, said the release of the data provided "much-needed transparency." He called the program "a historic lifeline" for small businesses.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer described the data release as a "good start" but lamented that it took so long and "so much pressure from Democrats" to make it public. He said more transparency was needed "to ensure that these taxpayer dollars went where Congress intended" — to the truly small and underbanked small businesses. Economists generally credit the

By the numbers

\$521B

Amount doled out by the Treasury Department's Payroll Protection Program through June 30.

7.5M

Jobs added by employers in May and June, driven in part by the program.

\$107K

Average loan amount for the program.

SOURCE: Associated Press

program with helping prevent the job market meltdown from being worse. Employers added 7.5 million jobs in May and June, a solid increase that was probably driven in part by the PPP. The economy still has nearly 15 million fewer jobs than before the pandemic.

Research by the Federal Reserve found that companies with fewer than 50 workers before the pandemic saw their hiring rise 12% in May, while jobs grew just 5% in larger firms, suggesting PPP helped firm rehiring.

Many small businesses have already run through their PPP money and face smaller demand, as consumers are wary of returning to habits of shopping, visiting gyms, or eating out. Texas, Florida, California, New York and other states have reversed their reopenings, closing bars and delaying the onset of indoor dining. The program provided loans of up to \$10 million for small businesses to help them recover from the government-ordered shutdowns and revenue losses caused by the virus. The average loan amount for the entire program was \$107,000, the Treasury Department said in a broad summary of the program.

The loans can be forgiven if businesses mostly use the money to continue paying workers. The program initially was set to expire June 30, but was extended last week to Aug. 8, with \$132 billion still available.



JAKE SHANE, (QUINCY, ILL.) HERALD-TRIBUNE/AP

Pawnshop owner Lionel Hammond said sales of his West Quincy, Mo., store have been off the charts and that he can't keep merchandise on the shelves as buyers are using their governmental stimulus money to buy firearms, jewelry, televisions and other electronics.

Pandemic, stimulus checks spawn boom for pawnshops

By ETHAN COLBERT
The (Quincy, Ill.) Herald-Whig

QUINCY, ILL. — Providers of fast money, pawnshops have taken on an enhanced profile in an economy turned upside down by the coronavirus.

"We were an essential business because we have loans. Not everyone can ... afford or qualify for a loan at a bank, so for a while we were thinking we were going to be pretty busy," said Mike Pigg, who has owned Mike's Jewelry and Loan since 2011.

Instead of being busy providing loans, Pigg and West Quincy Pawn Shop owner Lionel Hammond said the pawnshops have been swamped with customers coming in buying guns, jewelry, electronics and other goods.

"Right now, we are still seeing people coming in with their stimulus checks, and they are in a buying mood. Never in all of my years, have I seen anything like this," said Hammond, who has owned West Quincy Pawn since 1995.

"This is the time of the year that people borrow money because they are going to go and do fun things, take vacations, weekend trips or just do something fun with their family. Because of the pandemic and not being able to work, many people are not going to do those fun things. They are instead looking for something to do that is fun at home, and for a while, we were one of the few places that was open for people to buy anything fun," Hammond said.

Hammond and Pigg both credited the federal government-issued

'When I talk to my friends who own pawnshops, they all tell me the same thing — it is a buying spree like no one has seen.'

Lionel Hammond
pawn shop owner in West Quincy, Mo.

stimulus checks, which provided up to \$1,200 to millions of American taxpayers, as the reason they are seeing this boom in spending that got its start in late April and early May. The stimulus checks were intended to encourage cash-strapped Americans to spur economic growth as the nation looked to economically rebound after the economy ground to a halt due to the pandemic.

"Honestly, when the coronavirus hit, it hit at a time when it's our Christmas time. We normally see a lot of people coming in and buying because they have their income tax returns, but this year there was no one coming in. People were using their income tax money to live on, not to buy things like electronics or jewelry. It got so bad here that I wasn't sure if we were going to be able to pull out of it," Pigg said.

Sales are up in many pawnshops, according to data from various trade organizations.

"When I talk to my friends who own pawnshops, they all tell me the same thing — it is a buying spree like no one has seen," Hammond said.

He explained that while business was allowed to stay open during the first wave of the pandemic, he is now having a hard time keeping merchandise on the

shelves because manufacturers and other retailers are closed.

Pigg said he was having similar difficulties.

"Electronics just flew out the door. We can't keep electronics in stock, especially game systems. People have been home for so long now that they are coming in and wanting to buy a new gaming system or something to simply give them something to do," Pigg said.

And like any other essential business, pawnshop owners and managers have made some adjustments to their store since mid-March to prevent the spread of the virus, including altered hours, adding hand sanitizing stations at the front door, plexiglass at the counter, and signs encouraging store patrons to maintain social distancing.

Both Pigg and Hammond say they anticipate the buying frenzy will likely stretch into mid-July as the volume of sales continues to slow.

"It is starting to slow, but as for how long it lasts you know," Hammond said. "It is bound to end eventually. Right now, people are starting to need money and loans again so maybe we are about ready to have normal times again."

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Schools debating over how and if to reopen

By PATRICK WHITTLE
AND CAROLYN THOMPSON
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine — School districts across America are in the midst of making wrenching decisions over how resume classes in settings radically altered by the coronavirus pandemic, with school buses running below capacity, virtual learning, outdoor classrooms and quarantine protocols for infected children the new norm.

The plans for the upcoming school year are taking shape by the day and vary district to district, state to state. The debates have been highly emotional, with tempers flaring among parents and administrators, and have been made all the more vexing by record numbers of COVID-19 cases being reported each day.

In Florida, some school districts want students back in the classroom in early August, even though the virus is surging through communities. On average, Florida has reported more than 7,000 new cases each day recently — more than seven times what it was reporting a month ago.

New Mexico, which has been largely spared major outbreaks, plans a hybrid model of virtual and in-person learning. Parents in New York have demanded schools reopen in the fall. And in Maine, more outdoor learning is planned. Districts nationwide are coming up with various rules for wearing masks. Some want all students wear them. Others, such as Marion County, Ind., plan to limit the requirement to older children.

Each of these decisions is fraught, trying to balance health concerns with clawing back as much normalcy as possible. Parents, wrung out after months of juggling full-time work and full-time home schooling, are desperate for help. Children, isolated from their peers, are yearning for social interaction. And everyone, including teachers, is concerned about stepping into the unknown,

with so much still uncertain about the virus.

Districts are worried about being able to afford added supplies — including masks and more buses. And school officials said the resurgence of virus cases underway could shatter reopening plans before they're even put in place.

Aimee Rodriguez Webb, a special education teacher in Cobb County, Ga., is wrestling with her own health concerns while waiting to hear her district's plans. She also has a 3-year-old.

"I love being in the classroom. And this year I get my own classroom, so I was looking forward to decorating it and all that," she said. "But then the flip side is ... I don't know that I'm mentally ready to step into the unknown like that."

Schools around the United States shut down suddenly this year as coronavirus cases first began rising. That led to a hodgepodge of distance learning, on-the-fly homeschooling and, for some families, a lack of any school at all. Districts are now turning their focus to how to create more structured environments.

But the debates have been filled with tension. Near Rochester, N.Y., parents rallied in favor of fully opening schools, holding signs outside an administration building June 29 saying: "No normal school? No school taxes!"

Christina Higley, a parent in the Rochester suburb of Webster, said she started a Facebook group initially to demand answers and have a say in what school would look like, but the discussions there sparked a movement for reopening schools.

"There's a lot of parents that are saying, 'Open our schools, let us have the decision if we feel comfortable sending the children in to them,'" said Higley, whose children just finished kindergarten, third and fifth grade.

The decisions are even more complicated in districts where the case count is rising. In Manatee County, Fla., the working plan



SETH WENIG/AP

Olivia Chan's father helps her with a new mask she received during a graduation ceremony for her Pre-K class in front of Bradford School in Jersey City, N.J.

is for all elementary students to return to school full time on Aug. 10. Older students would rely on virtual learning while they are phased back into brick-and-mortar schools.

But that proposal isn't set in stone amid a surge in infections. The county recorded its highest number of new cases in a single day in late June.

If a student tests positive for the virus in the new school year, classrooms or whole buildings would need to be disinfected, said Mike Barber, a district spokesman. Students and staff with confirmed infections wouldn't be able to return until they had tested negative twice.

Meanwhile, medical experts have expressed concerns for children's development and mental health. The American Academy of Pediatrics said it "strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having

students physically present in school."

In Cape Elizabeth, Maine, Shael Norris said she's particularly concerned about children who could face abuse at home and parents who risk losing their jobs to care for their kids. Norris has two children set to attend high school in the fall and runs a nonprofit that combats sexual assault.

"There are so many equally important risks, and we're focused entirely on COVID," she said. "But I get it. It's scary."

Maine never saw a major outbreak, and it is now reporting, on average, a few dozen cases each day. Still, the state's largest school district of Portland has left all the options on the table, a full reopening, a partial reopening or fully remote learning.

The district sent a letter to parents that said it plans to use outdoor space when possible — a solution for only a few months a year, given Maine's weather.

In order to keep kids a safe distance apart on school buses, districts will need more vehicles — an especially thorny issue for rural districts, where students travel vast distances. New Mexico has issued guidelines that buses should be run at 50% capacity, according to Nancy Martira, a spokeswoman for the state Department of Education.

Many districts plan to lean heavily on federal bailout money to pay for their extra transportation needs.

It's all adding up to an anxious start to the school year.

"Nobody has really laid out a clear plan for how you're going to keep kids safe, especially smaller kids who are not going to be able to social distance all day, and they're going to touch things and take their mask off," said Duncan Kirkwood, whose 9- and 11-year-old daughters attend the Charter School for Applied Technologies in Buffalo, N.Y.

New at Saudi hajj: Bottled holy water and sterilized pebbles

By AYA BATRAWY
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Saudi Arabia has issued guidelines for about 1,000 pilgrims who will be allowed to perform the hajj pilgrimage in Mecca later this month, an experience that will be unlike any before because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The pilgrims will be only be able to drink holy water from the Zamzam well in Mecca that is packaged in plastic bottles, and pebbles for casting away evil that are usually picked up by pilgrims along hajj routes will be sterilized and bagged ahead of time. Pilgrims will also have to bring their own prayer mats.

The guidelines were announced

Monday as Saudi authorities prepare for a very limited hajj, which for the first time will not include pilgrims from outside the country. Instead, the kingdom said that 70% of pilgrims allowed to make the pilgrimage this year will be from among foreign residents of Saudi Arabia and 30% would be Saudi citizens.

Saudi pilgrims will be selected from among health care workers and security personnel who have recovered from COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus. The government said their selection represents a "token of appreciation for their role in providing care during the pandemic."

Saudi Arabia has one of the Middle East's largest outbreaks

of the virus, with infection rates rising by 3,000-4,000 cases daily. More than 213,000 people have contracted the virus in the kingdom so far, including 1,968 who have died.

The new guidelines also mandate that the foreign residents making this year's pilgrimage should be between the ages of 20 and 50, and that they have not performed the hajj before. The pilgrims will have to quarantine before and after the hajj, and they will be tested for the coronavirus. Those eligible have until Friday to submit an application through the Hajj Ministry's website.

Saudi Arabia has dramatically scaled back the hajj due to concerns about overcrowding at the

annual pilgrimage, which usually draws about 2.5 million people, saying its decision was aimed at preserving global public health.

At the hajj, the crowds move, pray and stand in extremely close proximity, often squeezed shoulder-to-shoulder, as they carry out five days of rites around Mecca. As part of the new safety measures this year, authorities said anyone participating in the hajj will not be allowed to touch the cube-shaped Kaaba, which is Islam's holiest site and the metaphorical house of God.

Pilgrims this year will also have to wear masks, maintain physical distance during prayers and sleep in tents that follow guidelines on social distancing.

In other developments in the Middle East, Iran's health ministry on Tuesday announced the highest single-day spike in deaths from coronavirus, with 200 new fatalities. Spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari said that was an increase of 40 from Monday, when 160 were reported to have died of COVID-19.

She blamed the spike on large gatherings for weddings and other ceremonies, where people do not observe distancing regulations. Iran on Sunday instituted mandatory mask-wearing even as its public increasingly shrugs off the danger of the virus. Iran has reported more than 245,000 cases of the virus so far and 11,931 deaths.

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

Foreign students must leave US if college is online

Associated Press

International students will be forced to leave the United States or transfer to another college if their schools offer classes entirely online this fall, under new guidelines issued Monday by federal immigration authorities.

The guidelines, issued by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, provide additional pressure for universities to reopen even amid growing concerns about the recent spread of COVID-19 among young adults. Colleges received the guidance the same day that some institutions, including Harvard University, announced that all instruction will be offered remotely.

President Donald Trump has insisted that schools and colleges return to in-person instruction as soon as possible. Soon after the guidance was released, Trump repeated on Twitter that schools must reopen this fall, adding that Democrats want to keep schools closed "for political reasons," not for health reasons."

Under the updated rules, international students must take at least some of their classes in person. New visas will not be issued to students at schools or programs that are entirely online. And even at colleges offering a mix of in-person and online courses this fall, international students will be barred from taking all their classes online.

The American Council on Education, which represents university presidents, said the guidelines are "horrifying" and will result in confusion as schools look for ways to reopen safely.

Alabama

MONTGOMERY — The number of COVID-19 patients in Alabama hospitals rose to a new high of 1,000 on Monday as health officials continued to urge people to wear masks and take precautions amid an uptick in cases.

Alabama on Thursday saw the highest number of cases reported in one day, at 1,700, and on Monday had more than 1,000 people hospitalized with COVID-19, the highest number since the pandemic began.

Alabama is recently averaging about 1,000 new cases per day, according to the Department of Public Health. Since the pandemic began, more than 44,000 people in the state have tested positive for COVID-19, and 984 people have died after contracting the illness.

State Health Officer Scott Harris and Dr. Don Williamson, the former state health officer who now heads the Alabama Hospi-

tal Association, said hospitals are managing, but the trends are concerning.

California

SACRAMENTO — A coronavirus outbreak is closing California's Capitol and forcing the Assembly to put off its return to work as infection and hospitalization rates soar across the state.

Assemblywoman Autumn Burke, a Democrat from Inglewood, tweeted Monday that she was exposed to COVID-19 by someone when the Assembly met on June 26 to pass a \$202.1 billion budget, even though she and others were wearing masks and observing physical distancing requirements.

Four other people who work in the Assembly have also tested positive for the virus, Speaker Anthony Rendon's office confirmed without indicating whether they were lawmakers or staff.

The Speaker's office said the Capitol building would be closed until further notice for "cleaning and sanitizing."

Florida

FORT LAUDERDALE — Florida's latest county is again severely limiting its restaurants and fully closing gyms and other indoor venues weeks after they reopened because a spike in coronavirus cases is creating a shortage of intensive care unit beds at its hospitals.

Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez said Monday that starting Wednesday, restaurants will be limited to outdoor dining, takeout and delivery service, and gyms, banquet halls and short-term vacation rentals like those available on Airbnb will be closed. Bars are already closed statewide and restaurants were limited to 50% capacity indoors.

Gimenez had initially said that restaurants would be closed to all dining, but in a statement Monday evening, the mayor said that after meeting with medical experts and the restaurant industry group that his emergency order "will allow for outdoor dining, where possible, to continue with restrictions." Those limits include no more than four people at a table with appropriate distancing and music to be played at a level that does not require shouting.

Louisiana

BATON ROUGE — The federal government is setting up five new drive-thru coronavirus testing sites in Louisiana's capital city region, which has been seeing spikes in confirmed cases of the



BEN MARGOT/AP

A masked man walks past outdoor diners at San Pedro Square on Monday in San Jose, Calif. The independence Day weekend saw one of Santa Clara County's largest increases in COVID-19 cases to date, which came as the state of California denied the county's application for further reopening of businesses and activities.

COVID-19 disease.

Baton Rouge's mayor, Sharon Weston Broome, said most of the sites will open Tuesday and operate seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with a goal of testing as many as 5,000 people a day. The federally supported test locations, which will use a self-administered nasal swab, will remain up and running through July 18.

Broome enacted a mask requirement last week for anyone entering a business around the city, as the region sees sizable increases in virus cases and hospitalizations, including an outbreak traced to a cluster of bars near the Louisiana State University campus.

The new testing sites — located at LSU, Southern University, Cortana Mall, a megachurch location and a multipurpose event center in neighboring Ascension Parish — will be supported by the Louisiana National Guard and other state agencies. Results are expected to take three to five days, according to the mayor's office.

Mississippi

JACKSON — Mississippi's Republican governor said Monday he is isolating himself after coming into contact with a member of the state House of Representatives who tested positive for the coronavirus.

In a tweet Monday, Gov. Tate Reeves said he received a virus test and is awaiting results.

Reeves did not identify the lawmaker, only that he came into contact with the individual "briefly" last week. Reeves was visibly in close contact last week with House Speaker Philip Gunn during the signing of a bill that removed the Confederate emblem from Mississippi's state flag.

Gunn announced Sunday that he had tested positive for the coronavirus.

Oregon

PENDLETON — A spike in COVID-19 cases in Umatilla County has been fueled in part by sick employees returning to work, as the economy there reopens, without realizing they have the virus because their symptoms are mild, a local public health official told a newspaper.

The county's largest workplace outbreak is at the Lamb Weston potato factory in Hermiston, The Oregonian/OregonLive reported.

The Oregon Health Authority reported 168 new confirmed or presumptive cases of COVID-19 statewide on Monday, bringing the total to 10,395. There were no new deaths reported; 215 people have died statewide since the beginning of the pandemic.

A surge of cases — more than 630 — has hit rural Umatilla County hard. The county 210 miles east of Portland has 2% of the state's population but has accounted for nearly one-fifth of Oregon's case count over the past week.

South Carolina

COLUMBIA — More than 100 inmates have been infected with COVID-19 in a South Carolina prison where one inmate has already died from the disease caused by the coronavirus.

According to numbers on the website of the South Carolina Department of Corrections, 124 inmates at the Tyger River Correctional Institution have been diagnosed with the disease. That represents the largest outbreak throughout South Carolina's pris-

on system and about one-third of the 322 total infections reported among its inmate population as of Monday afternoon.

Thus far, 146 staff members across the agency have reported testing positive for the virus.

Tyger River is a medium-security men's prison in Enoree, about 75 miles northwest of Columbia. Last week, prison officials confirmed that a 58-year-old inmate there had died of complications from COVID-19, a week after being hospitalized for his symptoms. Stanley Smith was the third South Carolina state prison inmate to die in the outbreak.

West Virginia

West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice on Monday instituted a mandatory face mask order for indoor spaces after the state reported record numbers of coronavirus cases over the weekend.

The Republican's executive order, which goes into effect at midnight, requires everyone over the age of 9 to wear the face coverings inside buildings when social distancing isn't possible.

New confirmed virus cases in the state have risen sharply in the last two weeks, with state health officials having recorded 118 infections Saturday and 76 on Sunday, both figures topping previous daily highs since the outbreak began.

Justice and his health officials have been urging West Virginians to wear masks as cases ticked up, with outbreaks linked to out-of-state tourism travel and church services. Still, the governor had stopped short of issuing a mask order, saying it would be politically divisive and difficult to enforce. On Monday, he said he could wait no longer.

NATION

Trump's June may be November issue for GOP

BY ALAN FRAM
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's June began with his Bible-clutching photo op outside a church after authorities used chemicals and batons to scatter peaceful demonstrators. It never got less jarring or divisive.

By the time it ended, he was downplaying a coronavirus pandemic upsurge that was forcing Western and Southern states to throttle back their partial reopening of businesses. And Republican strategists already straining to retain Senate control in November's elections were conceding that Trump's performance could make it harder to defend their majority.

One said key Republicans were telling Trump they're worried about his campaign and he should heed polls showing him in trouble. Another pointed to surveys showing diminished public optimism and many voters' views that Trump is poorly managing the surging virus and languishing economy. Still another said Republicans worry the GOP brand of cutting taxes could be overshadowed by Trump's drive to defend Confederate monuments.

All spoke on the condition of anonymity to speak candidly about the party's internal thinking, in-



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

President Donald Trump holds a Bible as he visits outside St. John's Church near the White House on June 1. Some Republicans are expressing concern about Trump's conduct over the course of last month and its impact on their party's ability to hold the Senate.

cluding the GOP's view that the Senate majority remains viable. Yet their willingness to discuss the problem, plus carefully worded assessments by Republican senators, highlight GOP worries about the impact of Trump using June to relentlessly cater to his

deeply conservative base without broadening his appeal by taking a more moderate tone.

"In all elections, the political environment shapes how things come out, and sometimes you can't control that," No. 2 Senate Republican leader John Thune, of

South Dakota, said last week. He said GOP candidates "need to do what they need to do to win. And in some states, he will be a benefit in some parts of the country. In other parts of the country, less so."

"It's been a little bit of a rough patch, but there's a lot of good stuff to be talking about," said Sen. Kevin Cramer, R-N.D., citing strong June rehiring numbers and a revamped North American trade deal. Cramer said candidates should focus on their own issues "and to the degree that it includes their work with the president, fine. To the degree that it's independent, that's fine, too."

Republicans control the Senate 53-47. Democrats must gain three seats to win the majority if they win the White House because of the vice president's tie-breaking vote, four if they don't.

Even measured against the warp-speed news cycle that's become routine under Trump, June was remarkable. He repeatedly used cataclysmic language to denigrate nationwide protests for social justice, mostly peaceful gatherings that he cast as mobs unleashing violence. He called for the U.S. military to "dominate" the streets of American cities, drawing rebukes from military leaders and his own current and former top Defense Department

officials.

He held his first campaign rally in the coronavirus era in Tulsa, Okla., where many in the small crowd wore no masks.

John Bolton, his former national security adviser, released a book claiming Trump asked China's president to buy more farm products to bolster his reelection. Trump also used the month to refuse to erase Confederate commanders' names from U.S. military bases, retweet an image of a Florida supporter shouting, "White power!" and question reports that Russia had placed bounties on U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

"Republican Senate candidates will have to defend things President Trump says and does between now and Election Day," said Rory Cooper, a Republican strategist and longtime Trump foe. Cooper said many Trump voters "are toxic to mainstream voters and will make down-ballot Republican candidates equally toxic."

Trump's June outbursts came as polls showed him trailing presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden nationally and in several battleground states. Trump trailed in nearly all 2016 surveys until late in that campaign.

Trump niece's book to come out next week

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A tell-all book by President Donald Trump's niece that has been the subject of a legal battle will be released next week.

Publisher Simon & Schuster cited "high interest and extraordinary interest" in the book by Mary Trump titled "Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's Most Dangerous Man." The book was originally set for release on July 28, but will now arrive on July 14.

The revised date, announced Monday, came after a New York appeals court cleared the way for the book's publication following a legal challenge by Trump's brother.

The White House did not respond immediately to a request for comment on the release date change.

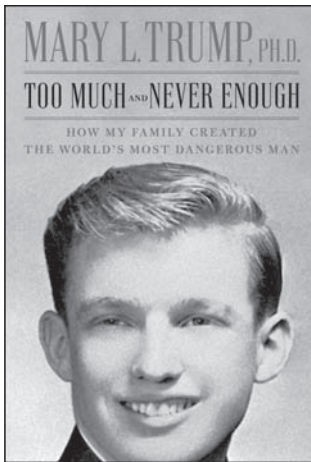
Robert Trump had sued Mary Trump to block publication of a book promoted to contain an "insider's perspective" of "countless holiday meals," "family interactions" and "family events."

A judge last week left in place a restraint that blocked Mary Trump and any agent of hers from distributing the book, but the court made clear it was not considering Simon & Schuster to be covered by the ruling. The publisher has said that 75,000 first-run editions had already been sent to bookstores.

Mary Trump is the daughter of Fred Trump Jr., the president's elder brother, who died in 1981. She holds a doctorate in psychology.

"Mary L. Trump has the education, insight, and intimate familiarity needed to reveal what makes Donald, and the rest of her clan, tick," a release about the book said.

The book is expected to include a number of allegations about President Trump, including how his upbringing led to his worldview and the derision



SIMON & SCHUSTER/AP

"Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's Most Dangerous Man," a book written by Mary L. Trump, President Donald Trump's niece, will be released on July 14.

he showed his father after he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

The book's back cover opens with a biting critique of the president: "Today, Donald is growing as he was at three years old: incapable of growing, learning, or evolving, unable to regulate his emotions, moderate his responses, or take in and synthesize information."

President sideswipes NASCAR and Black driver over flag, noose

BY JILL COLVIN
AND JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — NASCAR's layered relationship with President Donald Trump took a sharp turn Monday when Trump took a sideswipe at the racing organization for banning the Confederate flag and wrongly accused the sport's only full-time Black driver of perpetrating "a hoax" when a crew member found a noose in the team garage stall.

Trump suggested Bubba Wallace should apologize after the sport rallied around him after the noose was found in his assigned stall at Talladega Superspeedway in Alabama. Federal authorities ruled last month the noose had been hanging since October and was not a hate crime. NASCAR and the FBI have exclusively referred to the rope — which was used to pull the garage door closed — as a noose.

It was the only garage pull out of 1,684 stalls at 29 inspected NASCAR tracks to be fashioned as a noose.

NASCAR President Steve Phelps has bristled at suggestions the noose was a hoax. Wallace was shown a photograph of the noose, never personally saw it, and was

told by NASCAR officials he was the victim of a hate crime.

"Has [Bubba] Wallace apologized to all of those great NASCAR drivers & officials who came to his aid, stood by his side, & were willing to sacrifice everything for him, only to find out that the whole thing was just another HOAX?" Trump tweeted. "That & Flag decision has caused lowest ratings EVER!"

The tweet came after Trump used a pair of Independence Day speeches to dig deeper into America's divisions by accusing protesters who have pushed for racial justice of engaging in a "senseless campaign to wipe out our history." The remarks served as a direct appeal to the Republican president's political base, including many disaffected white voters, with less than four months to go before Election Day.

Wallace responded on Twitter with a note to "the next generation and little ones following my foot steps" in which he urged people to use their platform and not be detracted by "hate being thrown at you."

"Love should come naturally as people are TAUGHT to hate," Wallace tweeted. "Even when it's HATE from the POTUS . Love wins."

NATION

VA nearing historically high budget

By STEVE BEYNON
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs is one step closer to securing its largest budget in history at more than \$250 billion, continuing a trend of the government's second-largest agency expanding rapidly in size to support a growing and aging veterans population.

House Appropriations subcommittee members Monday forwarded a bill funding the VA at unprecedented levels to its full committee to send to the House floor for a vote. The bill gives more money to the VA than the \$243.3 billion requested by President Donald Trump in the proposed 2021 budget from the White House.

The funding proposal boosts virtually all of the department's major services and priorities of VA Secretary Robert Wilkie and Capitol Hill: suicide prevention, women's health care and a \$1.1 billion boost to implement the agency's troubled health reform system.

"The [military construction]/VA bill includes historic spending for women veterans, mental health, suicide prevention, medical research and homeless prevention, while closely monitoring VA claims processing and system modernization," said Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Fla., chairwoman of the subcommittee on military construction, veterans affairs, and related agencies.

VA is one of the only federal agencies not getting a budget cut and it is the only Cabinet department eyeing a double-digit budget boost — 14%, according to Trump's proposed budget.

The proposed budget is Trump's fourth time requesting an increase for the VA, continuing a pattern set by previous administrations with little significant pushback from Congress. The agency's budget has increased consistently since the beginning of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. In 2001, the budget was \$48 billion.

“The [military construction]/VA bill includes historic spending for women veterans, mental health, suicide prevention, medical research and homeless prevention.”

Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz
D-Fla.

"Over the last decade, the VA's budget has more than doubled — far outpacing the growth in patients and beneficiaries," said Darin Selnick, a senior adviser for Concerned Veterans of America, a conservative veterans advocacy group. "Additionally, the VA has added nearly 50,000 employees in the past five years — making it larger than the active-duty United States Navy in terms of personnel."

Selnick said money is "merely a talking point" for lawmakers and the VA needs to become more efficient, suggesting an audit "would be a good place to start."

The cash flow into VA's mammoth electronic health record modernization continues to expand after a series of delays. The overhaul of the VA's system is designed to permit the VA to share Defense Department medical records of transitioning service members and ease the burden on veterans to prove service-connected injuries and illnesses. The new system was also created to allow the VA to share information easily with private-sector health care providers who treat veterans as more veterans are able to seek care outside the VA with federal funding.

The VA's budget still has a long way to go before being finalized, including a compromise budget negotiated by House and Senate lawmakers and a full vote from each chamber.

Here are some of the highlights of what the House Appropriations subcommittee bills include:

■ \$10.3 billion for mental health care, an increase of \$865 million from the 2020

enacted level and \$40 million more than Trump's budget request, including \$313 million for suicide prevention outreach.

■ \$661 million for gender-specific care for women, an increase of \$76 million from the 2020 enacted level, and \$35 million more than Trump's budget request.

■ \$1.9 billion for homeless assistance programs, an increase of \$81 million from the 2020 enacted level, and \$40 million more than Trump's budget request.

■ \$504 million for opioid abuse prevention, an increase of \$102 million from the 2020 enacted level and equal to Trump's budget request.

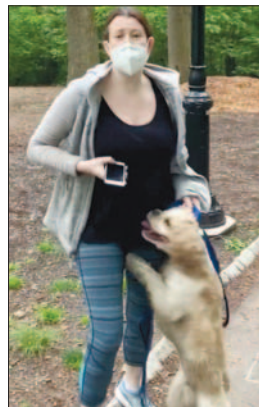
■ \$300 million for rural health initiatives, equal to the 2020 enacted level and \$30 million more than Trump's budget request.

■ \$840 million for medical and prosthetic research, an increase of \$40 million from the 2020 enacted level, and \$53 million more than Trump's budget request.

■ \$2.6 billion to continue implementation of the VA Electronic Health Record System, an increase of \$1.1 billion from the 2020 enacted level and equal to Trump's budget request. The bill also continues Government Accountability Office oversight of the program to ensure the EHR system is implemented in a timely manner.

■ \$1.8 billion for VA construction, an increase of \$139 million from the 2020 enacted level and equal to Trump's budget request.

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CHRISTIAN COOPER/AP

Amy Cooper, shown in an image made from video, called police during a dispute with Christian Cooper, a Black man, in Central Park in New York. She was charged with filing a false report.

White woman charged after Central Park racist dispute

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A white woman walking her dog who called the police during a videotaped dispute with a Black man in Central Park was charged Monday with filing a false report.

In May, Amy Cooper drew widespread condemnation for calling 911 to report she was being threatened by "an African-American man" when bird-watcher Christian Cooper appeared to keep his distance as he recorded her rant on his phone.

District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. said in a statement Monday that his office had charged Amy Cooper with falsely reporting the confrontation, a misdemeanor. She was ordered to appear in court Oct. 14.

After the backlash, Amy Cooper released an apology through a public relations service, saying she "reacted emotionally and made false assumptions about his intentions."

"He had every right to request that I leash my dog in an area where it was required," she said in the written statement. "I am well aware of the pain that misassumptions and insensitive statements about race cause and would never have imagined that I would be involved in the type of incident that occurred with Chris."

Judge orders Dakota pipeline shut down for review

Associated Press

FARGO, N.D. — A judge Monday ordered the Dakota Access pipeline shut down for additional environmental review more than three years after it began pumping oil — handing a victory to the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and delivering a blow to President Donald Trump's efforts to weaken public health and environmental protections his administration views as obstacles to businesses.

In a 24-page order, U.S. District Judge James Boesberg in Washington, D.C., wrote that he was "mindful of the disruption" that shutting down the pipeline would cause, but that it must be done within 30 days. Pipeline owner Energy Transfer plans to ask a court to halt the order and

will seek an expedited appeal, spokeswoman Vicki Granado said.

The order comes after Boesberg said in April that a more extensive review was necessary than what the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers already conducted and that he would consider whether the pipeline should be shuttered during the new assessment.

"The Court does not reach its decision with blithe disregard for the lives it will affect," Boesberg wrote Monday.

"Yet, given the seriousness of the Corps' NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) error, the impossibility of a simple fix, the fact that Dakota Access did assume much of its economic risk knowingly, and the potential harm each day the pipeline operates, the Court is forced to conclude

that the flow of oil must cease," he added.

The findings may challenge the legal footing for the Trump administration's most momentous environmental rollbacks. Trump surrounded himself with industry leaders and workers in hard hats in January when he announced plans to overhaul the rules for enforcing NEPA.

The Dakota Access pipeline was the subject of months of protests in 2016 and 2017, sometimes violent, during its construction near the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation that straddles the North Dakota-South Dakota border. The tribe pressed litigation against the pipeline even after it began carrying oil from North Dakota across South Dakota and Iowa and to a shipping point in Illinois in June 2017.



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WORLD

Russian space adviser charged with treason

Associated Press

MOSCOW — An adviser to the director of Russia's state space corporation has been detained on treason charges, the nation's top security agency said Tuesday.

Ivan Safronov, a former journalist who served as an adviser to Roscosmos head Dmitry Rogozin, was detained in Moscow by agents of the Federal Security Service (FSB), the main KGB successor agency.

The FSB said that Safronov is accused of relaying sensitive data to a spy agency of an unspecified NATO member. He could face up to 20 years in prison if convicted.

Roscosmos claimed that the charges didn't relate to Safronov's work for the corporation, which he joined in May. Prior to that, Safronov worked as a correspondent for the top business daily Kommersant for nearly a decade until 2019, and after that worked for a year for another business daily, Vedomosti.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Safronov's detention isn't related to his activities as a journalist.

Last year, the FSB reportedly



PETER KASSIR, KOMMERSANT/AP

Ivan Safronov, an adviser to the director of Russia's state space corporation Roscosmos, has been detained on treason charges, the nation's top security agency said Tuesday.

opened an inquiry following Safronov's article that claimed that Russia had signed a contract with Egypt for the delivery of sophisticated Su-35 fighter jets. Kommersant later removed the report from its website, and no charges were filed.

Dutch police uncover makeshift torture chamber, arrest 6 men

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — Dutch police arrested six men after discovering sea containers that had been converted into a makeshift prison and sound-proofed "torture chamber" complete with a dentist's chair, tools including pliers and scalpels and handcuffs, a high ranking officer announced Tuesday.

Authorities said police conducted the raid before the torture chamber could be used and alerted potential victims, who went into hiding.

The grisly discovery was made last month by officers investigating leads generated by data from encrypted phones used by criminals that were cracked recently by French police. Detectives in Britain and the Netherlands have already arrested hundreds of suspects based on the encrypted messages.

Tuesday's announcement gave a chilling insight into the increasingly violent Dutch criminal underworld, which is involved in the

large-scale production and trafficking of drugs.

Dutch police said last week that their investigations, code-named 26Lemont, based on millions of messages from the EncroChat phones, had led to the arrest of more than 100 suspects and seizure of more than 17,600 pounds of cocaine and 2,600 pounds of crystal meth as well as the dismantling of 19 synthetic drugs labs and seizure of dozens of firearms.

On June 22, Dutch national police force officers arrested six men on suspicion of crimes including preparing kidnappings and serious assault. Detectives also discovered the seven converted sea containers in a warehouse in Wouwse Plantage, a village in the southwest, close to the border with Belgium, according to a statement released Tuesday.

They were tipped off by messages from an EncroChat phone including photos of the container and dentist's chair with belts attached to the arm and foot supports. The messages called the

warehouse the "treatment room" and the "ebi," a reference to a top security Dutch prison. The messages also revealed identities of potential victims, who were warned and went into hiding, police said.

Video released by the police showed a heavily armed arrest team blasting open a door at the warehouse and discovering the improvised prison. Another armed team detained a suspect in Rotterdam.

"Six of the containers were intended as cells in which people could be tied up and one container was intended as a torture chamber," Andy Kragt, head of the police's National Investigation Service, said in a video released by police, adding that the police operation "prevented a number of violent crimes."

A search of the containers uncovered bags containing tools including hedge cutters, scalpels and pliers.

A court in Amsterdam ordered the six suspects held for 90 days as investigations continue.

Stripes

SERVICE DIRECTORY

The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market



Transportation

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Dog alerts owner to house fire next door

TN FRANKLIN — A dog in Tennessee became a hero on the Fourth of July by alerting her owner to a house fire next door.

Roux, a 3-year-old Belgian Malinois, woke her owner Jeff LeCates with "frantic and unusual barks" Saturday night, a Franklin Fire Department press release said.

When LeCates opened his door to investigate, Roux burst out and LeCates saw his neighbor's home on fire, officials said.

LeCates banged on their door, waking the family of three and their pets, and then used a garden hose on the fire until firefighters arrived. No one in the home was injured.

Woman recovering after attack by alligator

SC OKATIE — A South Carolina woman is being treated for injuries after being attacked by an alligator in her neighborhood.

The 75-year-old woman was trimming plants near the edge of a pond in her gated community in the Okatie area Friday night when a 10-foot alligator latched onto her leg and pulled her into the water, according to the Department of Natural Resources.

Spokesman David Lucas said that a man passing by on a golf cart jumped into the water to help the woman, and the alligator briefly pulled both of them underwater.

According to Lucas, the woman has already undergone one surgery after suffering several fractures to her leg as well as lacerations. Authorities said the alligator had been killed and would undergo a necropsy.

Man firing gun prompts long SWAT standoff

OH DAYTON — A man angry that a fireworks exploded near his apartment complex shot at the man who set it off, authorities said, sparking a standoff that lasted for several hours.

The shooting in Dayton occurred early Monday. The shots struck a car but did not hit any people, authorities said, and no injuries were reported.

After firing the shots, the shooter returned to his apartment. Police were called to the complex, and about six hours later, the man was taken into custody. Charges have not been announced and he has not been identified.

Airport to receive \$17M in federal funding

NV LAS VEGAS — Las Vegas' McCarran International Airport will receive federal funding to help with improvements.

The Las Vegas Review Journal reported Sunday that the nation's eighth-busiest airport will get \$17 million in grant money for upgrades. It's part of \$800 million in infrastructure spending being



ERIC CARVIN/AP

Space in the sand

People are flocking back to the Jersey Shore, as coronavirus-related restrictions are being eased and temperatures are climbing. Visitors to Monmouth Beach, N.J., on Sunday had plenty of room to keep physical distance while lounging in the sand and playing in the surf.

doled out to airports nationwide, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Airport spokesman Chris Jones said the funds will help with repairing the surface of an aircraft parking area as well as refurbishing a nearby gate for ground vehicles.

Man facing charges for riding a wild horse

MD SALISBURY — A man is facing criminal charges for riding one of the wild horses at a national park where the Maryland herd of feral animals is protected.

National Park Service spokeswoman Kelly Taylor told news outlets that charges were filed against the man, but she didn't release his name or specify the charges.

The Salisbury Daily Times reported Sunday that a video of the man riding a horse on Assateague Island circulated on social media.

Taylor said the man faces a possible fine of up to \$5,000 and a maximum of six months in jail if he is convicted.

Lightning strikes and injures 2 men on beach

FL CLEARWATER — Lightning struck two people Sunday afternoon as a line of storms from the Gulf of Mexico moved onto Clearwater Beach, police said.

THE CENSUS

4 The number of people injured in a shooting in a Pennsylvania home. Authorities said Mark Ivie Jr., 20, and another man had fought after midnight Sunday near Ivie's Ephrata home. Authorities said at their home, Mark Ivie Sr., 43, gave a rifle to Ivie Jr., who then shot at six people. The man Ivie fought with was among those he shot at, but it wasn't clear if that man was among the wounded. Ivie Jr. is charged with six counts each of attempted homicide, aggravated assault and conspiracy. His bail was set at \$1 million. The elder Ivie faces six counts each of aggravated assault and conspiracy. His bail was set at \$750,000.

Gacek Arkadiusz, 37, of Des Plaines, Ill., was unconscious and not breathing when police arrived at 2:15 p.m., media outlets reported.

An officer began CPR until lifeguards arrived and took over medical treatment.

He was taken to the hospital in critical condition, Clearwater police said.

Sav Keomany, 43, of Pickerington, Ohio, who was a few feet away, was taken to the hospital in stable condition, media outlets reported.

House fire was likely set off by fireworks

SD HARRISBURG — Firefighters in Harrisburg responded to a house fire started by fireworks, authorities reported Sunday.

No one was hurt in the fire that damaged one home, the Argus Leader reported.

Lincoln County Emergency Management coordinator Fred Timmerman said that the homeowners told fire investigators

they had doused discharged fireworks near their home with water earlier that night.

But Timmerman said it appears one of the fireworks ignited and went off near the house.

Firefighters were called to the scene around 2 a.m. Sunday and fought the fire for several hours. County authorities also responded to a barn fire set off by a bottle rocket firework Saturday night.

No one was injured in that fire either.

State: Boat at bottom of bay must be removed

MI TRAVERSE CITY — A sunken boat must be removed from the bottom of Grand Traverse Bay in northern Michigan, according to state officials.

Federal and state authorities said Thursday they are working to arrange the salvage operation for the 33-foot-long vessel that sank last month, the Traverse City Record-Eagle reported.

Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy spokesman Nick Assendelft

said officials "don't want that left in the water."

The boat took on water June 19 and sank. The 10 people on board were rescued by the Coast Guard.

700 nurses at hospital strike over pay, safety

IL JOLIET — More than 700 nurses at Amita Health St. Joseph Medical Center Joliet went on strike Saturday morning after negotiations between the hospital and the nurses union failed to result in a contract.

One of the main sticking points in the negotiations is the staffing levels are too low to keep the nurses safe.

The strike comes after Amita Health, which has 19 hospitals in Illinois, issued a statement that said it would bring in other licensed nurses during a strike, prepare to have ambulances bypass the hospital if necessary and cancel nonurgent surgeries.

In an email Saturday to the Chicago Tribune, a spokesman for Amita Health said a "minimum number" of patients had been transferred to Amita Health Adventist Medical Center Hinsdale prior to the strike.

The nurses union, the Illinois Nurses Association, has been in negotiations with Amita Health since February and the nurses have been working without a contract since May 9.

From wire reports

FACES

‘Devil Went Down to Georgia’ fiddler Charlie Daniels dies

By HARRISON SMITH
The Washington Post

Charlie Daniels, a onetime session musician who went on to bridge country and rock as a rowdy, fiddle-playing solo artist, rising to the top of the country charts with his fiery single “The Devil Went Down to Georgia,” died July 6 at a hospital in Nashville. He was 83.

The cause was a stroke, according to a statement on his website.

With a Stetson on his head and a fiddle under his chin, Daniels helped introduce Southern rock into mainstream country in the 1970s, honing a musical style that mixed gospel, folk and Dixie boogie. “He can make a fiddle sound like a rock ‘n’ roll guitar, he can make a guitar sound like a country fiddle and he can make a tall tale sound believable,” Washington Post music critic Geoffrey Himes once wrote.

Daniels was a versatile singer, songwriter, guitarist and blazing-fast fiddler, best known for beating down the devil in his 1979 classic “The Devil Went Down to Georgia.” Early on, he was also something of a transgressive figure in country music, singing of getting “stoned in the morning” and “drunk in the afternoon” in “Long Haired Country Boy.”

“Kinda like my old bluetick hound, I like to lay around in the shade,” he sang, “and I ain’t got no money but I damn sure got it made.”

Daniels spent more than a decade crisscrossing the country as a journeyman musician, performing for several years at clubs in Washington and Maryland, where he had aumping stage presence at 6-foot-2 and 265 pounds. He eventually settled in Nashville, where he co-wrote “It Hurts Me,” which became a Top 40 hit for Elvis Presley in 1964, and played on Bob Dylan’s acclaimed country album “Nashville Skyline.”

His work on that record made him a sought-after session musician, leading him to record with Leonard Cohen, Pete Seeger, Ringo Starr and bluegrass artists. “He’d struggled before earning millions for himself as a solo artist with



Charlie Daniels in 2016

“Uneasy Rider.” Sometimes described as a novelty record, the 1973 talking blues song played off the counterculture movie “Easy Rider” and cracked the Top 10, paving the way for the formation of the Charlie Daniels Band.

Modeled after the Allman Brothers Band, the group featured two guitarists and a jam-oriented sound polished through near-constant touring. It reportedly played 250 concerts a year, in between recording “Fire on the Mountain” (1974) and “Night-rider” (1975).

“Our music represents wide-open spaces and a free-wheelin’ attitude,” Daniels told Stereo Review magazine in 1980. In a separate interview, he said that his band’s music was neither country nor rock ‘n’ roll, and was written simply for “beer drinkers, dope smokers and hell-raisers — people like I live hard.”

Daniels scored his biggest commercial hit with “The Devil Went Down to Georgia,” the Faustian story of a fiddle duel between the devil and a young musician named Johnny, who risks his soul to win a golden fiddle.

Released with the album “Million Mile Reflections” (1979), the song topped the country charts, reached No. 3 on the pop charts and gained a wide audience after Daniels performed it in the John Travolta movie “Urban Cowboy” (1980).

In 2008, he became a member of the Grand Ole Opry, and in 2016 he was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame.



NETFLIX/AP

From left: Syd Brisbane, Yvonne Strahovski and Ewen MacMorrine star in one of the week’s new offerings, the Cate Blanchett-created “Stateless,” a six-part series streaming on Netflix.

Projects old and new

Shaggy rerelease, Charlize Theron, Dalai Lama featured this week

By The Associated Press

Here’s a collection curated by The Associated Press’ entertainment journalists of what’s arriving on TV, streaming services and music platforms this week.

Movies

“The Old Guard”: The summer movie season may be nonexistent this year, but Netflix had a pinch-hitter ready to stream: “The Old Guard.” Available Friday, this comic book adaptation stars Charlize Theron as the leader of a group of ancient immortals who have found another teammate in a soldier played by Kiki Layne (“If Beale Street Could Talk”). It’s directed by Gina Prince-Bythewood, who also helmed “Love & Basketball” and “Beyond the Lights.”

“Palm Springs”: If a rom-com is more your speed, there’s also “Palm Springs,” on Hulu on Friday, starring Andy Samberg and Cristin Milioti as wedding guests who find themselves caught in a time loop. The sunny pic caused a stir earlier this year when it broke the Sundance Film Festival acquisition record by 69 cents.

“Bloody Nose, Empty Pockets”: Blurring the line between documentary and fiction, filmmaker brothers Bill and Turner Ross (“Western”) turn their camera on a group of people in a Las Vegas dive bar the day after Donald Trump’s election. The filmmakers rented the space, recruited the patrons and told them all to pretend that the bar was closing at the end of the night. But the alcohol is real, the conversations unexpected and the result, available to rent Friday, is filmmaking magic.

— AP Film Writer Lindsey Bahr

Music

The Dalai Lama: To commemorate his 85th birthday on July 6, the Dalai Lama is releasing his

first-ever album. The 11-track “Inner World” features teachings and mantras by the Tibetan spiritual leader set to music. Grammy-nominated sitar player Anoushka Shankar makes a guest appearance on the album, playing on “Ama La,” a track honoring mothers.

Shaggy: In 2000, reggae artist Shaggy dominated pop radio with his ubiquitous No. 1 hits, “It Wasn’t Me” and “Angel.” Twenty years later, he’s celebrating the album that featured those songs, “Hot Shot,” by rereleasing the project and including updated versions of his hits. “Hot Shot 2020” will be available Friday and will also include classic songs from Shaggy’s catalog, including the 1995 smash “Boombastic.” Sting, who collaborated with Shaggy on the Grammy-winning 2018 album “44/876,” is featured on new versions of “Angel” and “Primavera.”

— AP Music Editor Mesfin Fekadu

Television

Viewers seeking to stir their hearts and minds should consider Netflix’s “Stateless,” set in an immigration detention center in the Australian desert. Co-created and produced by Cate Blanchett, the six-part drama on Wednesday brings together an unlikely group of strangers, including an airline steward running away from a cult, a family of Afghan refugees and a bureaucrat attempting to contain a national scandal. The story’s goal, as Blanchett described it, is to illustrate the global displacement crisis and “how we’re being separated from our humanity.”

Muscles and grit developed at work, not with a personal trainer, are put to the test in CBS’ “Tough as Nails,” a competition series debuting Wednesday. A farmer, roofer and iron worker are among those testing their mental and physical prowess in job-site challenges. The series is hosted and produced by Phil Keoghan (“The Amazing Race”).

— AP Television Writer Lynn Elber

Disney Plus streaming app a hot ticket over ‘Hamilton’ weekend

From wire reports

Walt Disney’s new Disney Plus streaming app was downloaded more than half a million times over the weekend after the service’s July 3 premiere of a filmed version of the musical.

The \$7-a-month Disney Plus generated 513,323 new mobile downloads worldwide from July 3-5, including 266,084 in the U.S., according to the market research firm App Annie. The global numbers are 47% higher than the average weekend in June, while the domestic results were 72% greater. The app had paid for itself \$75 million for the film, which was shot with the original

cast in 2016. The musical, based on the life of the nation’s first secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton, has been a huge hit on Broadway. The company had originally planned to release it in theaters next year.

The App Annie tally represents mobile only, and doesn’t include people who acquired the app via the Disney website, Roku or other TV-linked devices. It also doesn’t include India and Japan, where Disney+ was rolled into existing products, App Annie said. Disney last said the service, launched only in November, had more than 54 million subscribers worldwide.

Other news

■ Venice Film Festival organizers said Tuesday that they are pushing forward with September plans for its 77th installment, which will include a slightly reduced number of films in the main competition as well as some outdoor and virtual screenings. If the schedule stays intact, it will be the first major film festival since COVID-19 essentially shut down the industry in mid-March. There will still be 50 to 55 films in the official selection, which will be announced on July 28.

■ RosettaBooks announced Tuesday

that it had acquired the memoir of the late Sargent Shriver, the Peace Corps’ founding director and an architect of President Lyndon Johnson’s “War on Poverty.” Shriver worked on the memoir, “We Called It a War,” in the late 1960s and it was only recently rediscovered. The 348-page book is scheduled for January. Shriver was the husband of President John F. Kennedy’s sister, Eunice.

■ Former Kasabian frontman Tom Meighan was sentenced to 200 hours of unpaid work after pleading guilty Tuesday at Leicester Magistrates’ Court in England to assaulting his former fiancée.

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OPINION

High court patches up Electoral College for 2020

By NOAH FELDMAN
Bloomberg Opinion

In a moment of deep uncertainty about making the 2020 presidential election work, the U.S. Supreme Court has struck a blow for stability and common sense. In a 9-0 decision, the court held that states have the power to force members of the Electoral College to vote for the candidate their state has pledged to support — and to punish them if they try to break faith with that promise to voters.

The decision is important because it will help avert an election disaster in which a few electors try to thwart the will of the people. More fundamentally, the decision shows that the Supreme Court is recognizing that presidential elections really are supposed to be about majoritarian democracy, notwithstanding the quirky and creaky features inherited from the men who wrote the Constitution over 230 years ago.

When an outcome garners the support of all the states, it can be easy to forget why the issue is important enough to make it to the court the first place. In the faithless elector case, the reason the justices had to weigh in is an ambiguity in the Electoral College system.

When designing a system for presidential elections, the framers could have told state legislatures that they had no preferences to Washington, D.C., to be counted. Instead, however, the framers devised the idea of an Electoral College made up of actual human beings, each with one vote, all of whom meet in their respective states and send their votes to Washington. (The name "Electoral College" makes it sound like all the electors get together in one place, but they don't, and never have.)

Because the electors are selected indi-

On Monday the justices acted like good, skilled mechanics.

vidually, a few of them over the years have entertained the idea that they, not the voters who chose them, should be allowed to decide for whom they will cast their ballots. After all, they say, they are "electors" — so they should be free to do the electing.

In practical terms, this would make a mockery of the idea that presidential elections are democratic at all. It's bad enough that the Electoral College system isn't purely majoritarian as it currently functions. Allowing electors to ignore their promises and follow their own agendas would introduce a huge element of randomness into a presidential election system that already occasionally thwarts the will of the voters.

Justice Elena Kagan, joined by six of her colleagues, held that Article II of the Constitution resolves the issue by stating that each state may select electors "in such manner as the Legislature thereof may direct." That language, she held, gives broad authority to the state legislature to figure out how it will choose electors, and that authority logically allows states to direct the electors to vote according to their promise; to sanction them if they do not; and to replace them with different electors who will do the job right. There are 15 states that already have such laws in place. It would be good for the other 35 to follow suit.

Justice Clarence Thomas, joined by Justice Neil Gorsuch, agreed with the result. But he quirkily said the issue cannot be resolved by the language of Article II, but

rather by the 10th Amendment, which says that powers not delegated to the federal government are reserved to the people — or to the states. Thomas, who loves states' rights, essentially concludes that sanctioning electors is an inherent sovereign right of the states.

But this view is a little worrisome. The presidential election is a federal undertaking governed by the Constitution. Logically, there could be no pre-existing sovereign right of states to choose electors in a process that did not come into existence until the Constitution created it. Like most states' rights arguments, Thomas' could be extended to enable the states to resist the federal government. Secession, the granddaddy of all states-rights arguments, was also based on the theory of an inherent sovereign right of the states to dissolve the bonds of the union.

For now, however, the good news is that Thomas and Gorsuch were not feeling so radical as to invite distortion of the presidential election by random electors who might hope to hijack the process.

The Electoral College system is wildly outdated. It needs repairs. But when you have an old Constitution like ours, sometimes the best thing isn't to buy a new one but to bring the old one into the shop and have expert mechanics do their best to help it run safely.

On Monday the justices acted like good, skilled mechanics. Here's hoping the old jalopy can get us through the November 2020 election — and the presidential transition that one can only hope will follow in January.

Noah Feldman is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist and a professor of law at Harvard University. His column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial board or Bloomberg LP and its owners.

Which do you prefer: Trump's agenda or Biden's?

By HUGH HEWITT
Special to The Washington Post

The best commentators on the presidential race who are also partisan — and that includes about 99% of all reporters, hosts, analysts, in my view — should nonetheless be able to fairly articulate the motivations of each coalition backing either President Donald Trump or former Vice President Joe Biden.

I will be voting for Trump. He believes in the Constitution, as proved most obviously by his two Supreme Court justices and 53 federal circuit court judges.

Trump will continue his military buildup, especially his expansion of the Navy, where he aims to reach 355 ships. Trump has confronted the Chinese Communist Party on its numerous crimes in a way no president has since the bilateral thaw began by Mao Zedong and President Richard Nixon in 1972, and yet is willing to deal with its hard-line leadership short of war. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo almost daily articulates and advances Trump's understanding of the new Cold War with China we find ourselves in. If there is any doubt about that, consider a recent speech by Robert O'Brien, in which the president's national security adviser declared, "The Chinese Communist Party is a Marxist-Leninist organization. The Party General Secretary Xi Jinping sees himself as Josef Stalin's successor."

Attorney General William Barr is a deeply intelligent, experienced and relentless force for the rule of law. Trump's supporters hope he oversees the rapid conclusion of U.S. Attorney John Durham's investigation into the interference with the

peaceful transition of power after Trump's surprise 2016 win and a cleansing from government of those who refuse to honor the people's votes.

Trump has pushed through a massive deregulation of the American economy, and his supporters want more of this shrinking of federal control.

Support for Biden rests on many pillars. He is genuinely pleasant and amiable, a calm and welcoming presence. Many of his supporters simply yearn for an era of domestic goodwill, of reborn "civility," and believe Biden will be gracious and kind to all.

Biden's supporters want taxes raised, significantly, to build infrastructure and to raise up long underserved Americans. Biden will defend and expand President Barack Obama's signature legislative achievement in health care. Biden's judges will be the opposite of Trump's, ready to leave the job of upmiring and eager to participate in a long overdue injection of new understandings of equality into American institutions. Biden judges will almost certainly see nothing wrong with the return of race-based rewards or in limiting the newly invigorated "Free Exercise" clause. The return of "goals and timetables," if not explicit quotas, will likely be assured. Reparations will not just be "on the table," they may wind up in law. Teacher unions expect a massive infusion of federal funding, and public employee unions generally expect the same for their beleaguered state-administered pension funds.

Though Biden has said he is against it, his supporters may expect him to sign any bill that increases the number of Supreme Court justices, in a successful repudiation of Franklin Roosevelt's failed 1937 plan to

pack the court. Indeed, most of Biden's supporters will want a new-millennium version of FDR, relentlessly experimenting with new agencies and programs, changing everything, often, in the name of social justice. His appointees will be from the left and the far left. This lurch to the left will be a feature, not a bug, as the Democratic coalition has presidential the left of Bill Clinton's or Obama's supporters. A Green New Deal will be law, and the United States will rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement and the Europeans committed to reviving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or Iran Deal. Trump's proposed peace plan for Israel and the Palestinian Authority will be withdrawn.

Biden supporters hope he will use "soft power" to coax the People's Republic of China into renewed amicable relations with the West. They expect from Biden a return to national security administered, as it had been until Trump, by the standing, though informal, central committee of foreign policy grandees of New York and Washington.

Amnesty for people in the country without permission will be a "first 100 days" goal for some. The hated border wall will likely be defended or stopped. A Democratic Congress could impose universal voting by mail on the states in the name of ending voter suppression.

That's a fair statement of the expectations of both coalitions after the weekend celebrating our shared freedoms. They should begin debating their visions across a stage, facilitated by fair moderators, soon.

Hugh Hewitt hosts a nationally syndicated radio show on the Salem Network.

OPINION

Putin finally sheds all democratic appearances

By VLADIMIR KARA-MURZA
Special to The Washington Post

Joseph Stalin was reported to have said, at a Bolshevik party meeting in 1923, that voting is “completely unimportant” — “what is extraordinarily important is ... who will count the votes, and how.” Except for a brief democratic interlude in the 1990s, this maxim has governed the Soviet and later the Russian government’s approach to elections ever since.

It was also on full display last week as the Central Election Commission announced the official results of a recent plebiscite that waived Vladimir Putin’s presidential term limits, allowing him to remain in power until 2036. Evidently unconcerned with appearances, the commission began publishing the tallies before voting has ended. According to the certified results, 78% of Russians voted to make Putin, in effect, president for life. His press secretary Dmitry Peskov hailed the vote as a “triumphant referendum” on Putin’s leadership.

Except, of course, it wasn’t. A referendum, as codified in Russian law and governed by the international framework under Russia’s membership in bodies such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, would have provided an opportunity to campaign on both sides; it also would have clearly established procedures on voting and counting; and it would have allowed independent and international observation at polling places. Given the trends in Russian public opinion — including the fall of public trust in Putin to 25% and a clear majority for age-limiting the presidency at 70 (Putin turns 68 this year) — it is hardly surprising that the Kremlin decided not to entrust such an important decision to the whim of the electorate.

Instead of a referendum, Russians got an ill-defined “public vote” — as Electoral



Russian President Vladimir Putin shows his passport to an election commission member as he arrives to take part in voting at a polling station in Moscow on July 1.

Commission chair Ella Pamylova called it, “a unique one-time affair.” While government agencies engaged in an unfettered push for a “yes” vote, the “no” campaign had its website blocked by the federal regulator and its rallies prohibited under the pretext of concern for public health. The voting lasted a whole week, with ballots handed out not only in regular polling places but also in makeshift mobile locations set up on park benches, car trunks and shopping trolleys. Organized coercion of public-sector employees to participate in the plebiscite was reported all over the country. (How they voted was of little concern: Ballots could be easily switched while being stored overnight in electoral commissions.) According to two exit polls, most voters in Moscow and St. Petersburg rejected Putin’s constitutional amendments. The official tallies for both cities recorded a resounding “yes.”

In regular circumstances, many of these

manipulations would have been exposed by independent observers — as they had been in previous Russian elections, most prominently in 2011. This time, however, the only observers allowed for the moment were those approved by state-controlled institutions. Poll watchers from the OSCE and the Council of Europe were not invited — instead, Russian television paraded “international monitors” carefully selected among Europe’s far-right politicians, the Kremlin’s most reliable allies in the West. One such “monitor,” German Bundestag member Stefan Keuter from the Alternative for Germany — a known Nazi sympathizer who has sent out pictures of Adolf Hitler, made anti-Semitic remarks and defended the Third Reich’s policy of forced euthanasia — praised Russia’s election standards as “higher than Germany’s.”

Outside of the choreographed statements from the Kremlin’s far-right partners, international reaction to Putin’s power grab

has been clear. “The outcome of this vote was decided long before the ballots were tallied,” the bipartisan leaders of the U.S. delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Rep. Alcee L. Hastings, D-Hawaii, and Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., said in a statement. “State-sponsored fraud, coercion, and obfuscation make it impossible to know the true will of the Russian people.” Sen. James Risch, R-Idaho, who chairs the Foreign Relations Committee, was even blunter, noting that the “sham” vote “has swept away all remnants of Putin’s legitimacy.”

Legitimacy is the key issue here. For a long time, Putin has been illegitimate de facto — extending his rule through a pre-arranged job swap (does anyone remember “President” Dmitry Medvedev?) or rubber-stamp “elections” in which opponents would be removed from the ballot. Until now, however, he was careful to maintain appearances, formally adhering to the letter of the law even as he violated its spirit.

This time, it’s different. By subverting term limits, Putin has become illegitimate de jure; in the same league with rogue regimes that had employed this trick before.

From now — and certainly from the end of his current mandate in 2024 — the world’s democracies should treat him the same way they had, say, Blaise Compaore in Burkina Faso or Alberto Fujimori in Peru. No more red-carpet ceremonies, no more “resets,” no more invitations to prestigious summits — in short, democracies should not offer the international acceptance Putin so desperately wants.

With his current mandate of 2020, Vladimir Putin has left the West no other choice. No other choice, that is, that wouldn’t betray its fundamental principles.

Vladimir Kara-Murza is a Russian democracy activist, author and filmmaker. He is the chairman of the Boris Nemtsov Foundation for Freedom and vice president of the Free Russia Foundation.

Uncertainty is part of process of briefing a president

By MICHAEL LEITER,
MICHAEL HAYDEN
AND ROBERT CARDILLO
Special to The Washington Post

Over the course of our careers in the intelligence community — years that spanned Republican and Democratic administrations — we regularly briefed presidents on intelligence issues. Regardless of how often we did so, walking into the Oval Office or the White House Situation Room was a serious and solemn experience. Our job was to explain our analysis of the situation in as objective a way as possible so that the president could make the best decision possible to protect the United States, our allies and our interests.

We had the easy job. We had only to present intelligence, which was almost by definition imperfect in countless ways, and advise. The harder job — making the ultimate choice — was, of course, the president’s. The big decisions, the ones that could have lasting effects on people across the globe, were far from easy. In fact, most often, they forced the president to tackle uncertainty in ways few of us can imagine.

With this background that we find the Trump administration’s response to reports of Russian bounty programs targeting U.S. troops in Afghanistan so deeply disturbing. Although the administration’s statements are anything but clear, the sum total seems to be that the president was not briefed because the reports were “unverified,” or lacked intelligence commu-

nity “consensus” or — in President Donald Trump’s own words — were a “hoax.” At the same time, national security adviser Robert O’Brien has said that the National Security Council had convened at least one meeting to prepare “options” for the president. And finally, the administration has stated that it plans no immediate action in response to the reports. In our view, this makes no sense.

First, intelligence on critical issues is almost always unclear. In fact, if we had applied the administration’s apparent standard for certainty before we briefed a president, we could have renamed the Daily Brief the Annual Brief, given how infrequently we would meet that lofty, unreasonable bar. As one of us used to say when asked to judge the CIA’s work, “We never get asked questions that would provide the clarity or certainty of a 9 or 10.”

Second, it was often the very uncertainty of the intelligence — dissenting views from various agencies, difficult questions regarding reliability and the challenge of collecting additional intelligence — that demanded presidential attention. In our experience, the intelligence community had a sacred responsibility to alert policymakers to potentially significant intelligence both because they had the ultimate responsibility to act and would need time to think through options, and because decisions about how to gain a clearer intelligence picture often themselves posed difficult choices.

Consider, for example, the raid that brought justice to Osama bin Laden. Although many now speculate that this was

an easy call by President Barack Obama, it was not. Obama was faced with uncertain and conflicting intelligence and was forced to decide based on imperfect — and sometimes competing — facts. Rather than eschewing a decision, the president embraced this uncertainty, stood up to his responsibility and decided, knowing the risks associated with doing so.

We saw President George W. Bush and our presidents before him tackle the same types of uncertainty because they knew — as Harry Truman so clearly expressed — where the buck stopped. Not all intelligence was perfect, and some — as we painfully recognize — was wrong. Nonetheless, these men knew they didn’t have the luxury of sitting back and waiting for complicated decisions to become easy ones.

Third, the White House argument that it was preparing options, but had not yet decided to act, fails to recognize that the president has already acted — just not in a way that protects U.S. interests. The president’s conclusion that these reports are yet another “hoax” — drawing a perfect parallel to his view of the bipartisan-recognized Russian interference in our elections in 2016 — provides Russia and Vladimir Putin an unmistakable win and severely undermines our own intelligence community. If the president is serious about knowing the truth, then dismissing ongoing intelligence collection and analysis should be his last instinct. And if discouraging further Russian misbehavior were his priority, the warning would obviously be aimed at Moscow rather than the U.S.

intelligence community and the media.

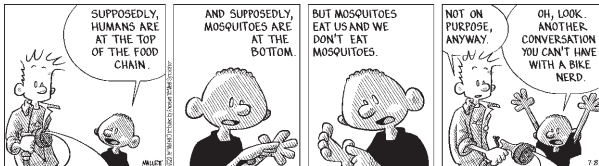
Trump’s call for Russia to be readmitted to the Group of Seven — while the intelligence community struggles with uncertain intelligence, and the National Security Council (we hope) struggles with the proper response to the prospect of Russia targeting U.S. troops — is yet another sign that the commander in chief isn’t fulfilling his responsibilities. Worse, his actions directly counter U.S. and our allies’ interests and bolster Putin’s campaign for a resurgent Russia.

From Moscow, the president’s invitation was roundly rejected by our strongest allies — undoubtedly provided yet another assurance that various types of Russian meddling were low on the president’s list of worries.

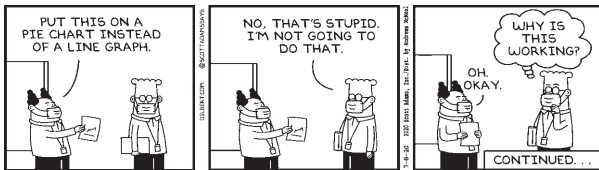
To be clear: None of what is occurring represents what commanders in chief have done in the past, and all of what is occurring is in the interest of U.S. interests — in the form of the precious lives of those defending us abroad — are being protected. The Oval Office is a place where difficult decisions will always be premised on imperfect information. We know well that if the commander in chief deflects or rejects intelligence that challenges his skewed worldview, the threat to our armed forces will be stronger and our nation will be weaker.

Michael Leiter was director of the National Counterterrorism Center from 2007 to 2011. Michael Hayden was CIA director from 2006 to 2009. Robert Cardillo was director of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency from 2014 to 2019.

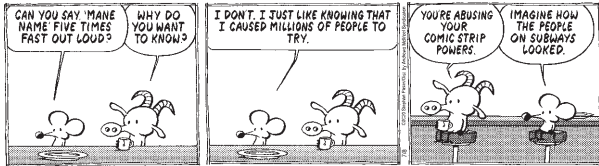
Frazz



Dilbert



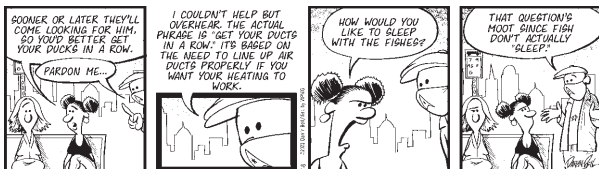
Pearls Before Swine



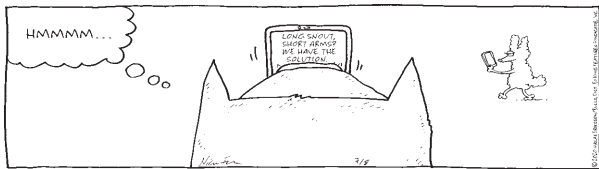
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



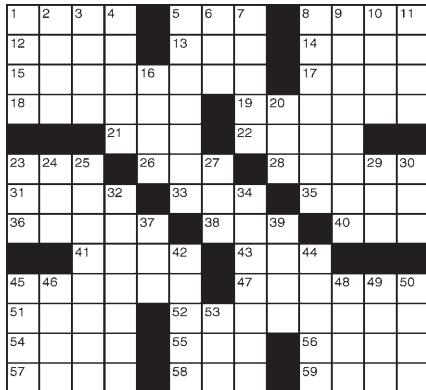
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 School support orgs.
- 5 String after E
- 8 Loyal
- 12 "Money — everything!"
- 13 Kanga's kid
- 14 Spanish greeting
- 15 Sweet snacks on sticks
- 17 Billions of years
- 18 Friend of Porthos
- 19 Like skim milk
- 21 Plopped down
- 22 "A likely story!"
- 23 "Do sum work?"
- 26 Shriner's cap
- 28 Eagle's descent
- 31 Profound
- 33 Quarterback
- 35 Pesky email
- 36 Clinch
- 38 Chest muscle
- 40 Fourth-yr. students
- 41 Historic Scott
- 43 Highland hat
- 45 Place of prayer
- 47 Swiss currency
- 51 Dove calls
- 52 Hotel personnel
- 54 Calendar entry (Abbr.)
- 55 Prefix with athlete

DOWN

- 1 Elite alternative
- 2 Despot
- 3 "Diana" singer
- 4 Rose parts
- 5 Iced, as a cupcake
- 6 Republicans
- 7 Egypt's Mubarak
- 8 Huey Lewis and —
- 9 Runways for Santa
- 10 Radius neighbor
- 11 Sunrise direction
- 16 Chanteuse Edith
- 20 Drs. that deliver
- 23 Billboards
- 24 Actress Ruby
- 25 Morning moisture
- 27 Microwave
- 29 Crew tool
- 30 Downing St. VIPs
- 32 Sticklers
- 34 "The Crown" provider
- 37 Corral
- 39 Astronomer
- 42 Unpaid bills
- 44 Taj —
- 45 Swindle
- 46 Great expectation
- 48 Alaskan city
- 49 Tax prep pros
- 50 Bygone fliers
- 53 Historic period

Answer to Previous Puzzle



7-8

CRYPTOQUIP

G X S K U - V G U K W B N B Q E B
P X R Q B M D S H R K B N K B B S K U
W H N M P K U X F X D K
X D B K O F K D B X M D : E T T M V D B N
G O E H E W S K .

Yesterday's Cryptquip: IF A VENDOR SAYS "HAVE I GOT A DEAL FOR YOU!", I GUESS THAT'S A PROPOSITIONAL PHRASE.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: S equals L

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BASKETBALL/SPORTS BRIEFS/SCOREBOARD

Taylor to be on WNBA jerseys

By DOUG FEINBERG
Associated Press

NEW YORK — WNBA players will wear uniforms for the opening weekend of the season featuring Breonna Taylor's name when the league begins play later this month.

Players will also wear warmups that read "Black Lives Matter" on the front and "Say Her Name" on the back throughout the season, the league and players' union announced Monday. Also, the phrase "Black Lives Matter" will be featured prominently on the courts where the teams practice and play.

Taylor, a 26-year-old Black emergency medical technician, was shot eight times by plainclothes Louisville police officers serving a narcotics search warrant at her apartment on March 13. No drugs were found. Her family and protesters around the country have called for swift action against the officers who shot Taylor.

"We are incredibly proud of WNBA players who continue to lead with their inspiring voices and effective actions in the league's dedicated fight against systemic racism and violence," WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert said. "Working together with the WNBA and the teams, the league aims to highlight players' social justice efforts throughout the 2020 season and beyond. Systemic change can't happen

overnight, but it is our shared responsibility to do everything we can to raise awareness and promote the justice we hope to see in society."

The jersey idea was first publicly put forth by Las Vegas Aces forward Angel McCoughtry. Players have the option to just wear the uniforms opening weekend or throughout the season.

The league and players association also announced the creation of a new platform — The Justice Movement — and the creation of the WNBA/WNBP Social Justice Council. The purpose of the council is to push for change on issues including race, voting rights, LGBTQ advocacy and gun control.

WNBA players Layshia Clarendon, Breanna Stewart, A'ja Wilson, Sydney Colson, Tierra Ruffin-Pratt and Satou Sabally will lead the council.

"As many WNBA players — past and present — have said and, more importantly, consistently demonstrated, the reason why you see us engaging and leading the charge when it comes to social advocacy is because it is in our DNA," WNBA President Nneka Ogwumike said. "With 140-plus voices all together for the first time ever, we can be a powerful force connecting to our sisters across the country and in other parts of the world. And may we all recognize that the league's stated commitment to us — in this season and beyond — offers a pivotal moment in sports history."



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

The Celtics' Jaylen Brown is encouraged by the steps the NBA is taking to connect with its players' desire to support social justice causes. He also says he wants to see the league go further with some of those plans as it prepares to restart the season in Florida.

Celtics star Brown taking social justice message to Florida

By KYLE HIGHTOWER
Associated Press

BOSTON — Jaylen Brown is encouraged by the steps the NBA is taking to connect with its players' desire to support social justice causes.

He also wants to see the league go further with some of those plans as it prepares to restart the season later this month in Florida.

One of the Celtics' young stars, the 23-year-old has been one of the most outspoken voices among players since the NBA paused its season in March.

From encouraging young Americans to take COVID-19 seriously, to driving 15 hours from Boston in May to lead a protest march in the days after the release of the video of George Floyd's death in Minneapolis, Brown has actively used social media to raise awareness on several fronts to his more than 1.6 million followers on Twitter and Instagram.

While he said Monday that he initially considered not playing in Orlando because of the pandemic and family concerns, he ultimately decided the opportunity to amplify his voice on the NBA's worldwide stage was worth it.

"Once I thought about the opportunity that the organization and the NBA presented to play for something bigger than myself, I was signed up," he said. "I plan on using my voice while I'm down there. I plan on spreading light on things that are getting dimmed and hopefully the NBA and our organization can understand."

Brown's heavily involved with the players association as a member of the executive committee and said he's encouraged by the open dialogue among players

and the NBA leadership's attentiveness to the union's concerns. That has included allowing an option for players to opt out of playing in Orlando.

Lakers guard Avery Bradley and Brooklyn's Kyrie Irving, who have been vocal leaders of a players' coalition that has sought to keep a focus on social justice and racial equality issues, are among a handful of players who are sitting out the Orlando restart. Bradley made his decision out of concerns for his son with a history of respiratory illnesses and Irving because of injury.

Last month the league announced a pledge to devote resources to helping players promote social justice causes. Those initiatives will include painting "Black Lives Matter" on the courts at Disney Wide World of Sports. And while players who decided to opt out of playing in Orlando won't be paid for the games they missed, they won't face discipline from their teams.

"At the end of the day, Black Lives Matter and Black athletes' lives matter as well," Brown said. "I respect any guy's decision. My decision was to play just because I felt like it's bigger than me and it's bigger than my family and it's bigger than all of us. People have died for the opportunity to be able to shed light and speak on certain causes. The least I could do is play basketball."

But Brown also is in agreement with Philadelphia 76ers forward Mike Scott that the NBA's plan to only allow players to choose messages from a league-approved list to put on the back of their jerseys is disappointing.

"I think that list is an example of a form of limitations," Brown said. "I think we should be able to express our struggle just a little bit more."

Briefly

FC Dallas withdraws from MLS tournament

By ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

FC Dallas has withdrawn from the MLS is Back tournament in Florida after 10 players tested positive for coronavirus.

The league said Monday that of the 557 players sequestered at a part of Walt Disney World hotels, 13 have tested positive: 10 from Dallas, two from Nashville and one from Columbus. Additionally, a Dallas coach also tested positive.

"The decision to have them not participate in the tournament is in the best interests of everyone, of the Dallas players and the other 25 teams, and allows us to continue to manage the health and safety of our players while continuing to go forward with our plan," MLS Commissioner Don Garber told The Associated Press in a telephone interview on Monday.

Apart from the health and safety aspect, the number of positive cases also meant that Dallas could not play competitive games. With Dallas' withdrawal, Major League Soccer was devising a new schedule for the monthlong tournament, to be played without fans at ESPN's Wide World of Sports Complex at Disney World.

The tournament is still set to open Wednesday with a nationally televised match between Orlando City and expansion Inter Miami.

FC Dallas announced last week that six players had tested positive upon arrival in Florida for the tournament, and the entire team was quarantined. Subsequent tests found four more players infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

The league said no other team

was in contact with the FC Dallas delegation.

Also on Monday, LAFC forward Carlos Vela opted out of the tournament out of concerns for his wife, who is expecting their second child.

"I always want to give everything I have to my club, our fans and supporters and the city of L.A.," Vela said in a statement. "However, it is in the best interest of the health of my family to stay home and be with my wife during what is a risky pregnancy."

PGA, Memorial change course on spectators

The PGA Tour and the Memorial scrapped state-approved plans to have limited spectators next week because of what it described as rapidly changing dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Memorial, hosted by Jack Nicklaus at his Muirfield Village Golf Club in Dublin, Ohio, was in line to be the first tournament with spectators since golf resumed its schedule on June 11 in Texas.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican, last month approved a plan that would allow the Memorial to have 20% capacity on property, which would include fans, private hospitality areas and essential staff to run the tournament.

"But given the broader challenges communities are facing due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we need to stay focused on the No. 1 priority for our 'Return to Golf' — the health and safety of all involved," PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan said in a statement Monday.

Sports on AFN

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myafn.net

Deals

Monday's transactions

FOOTBALL
National Football League
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS — Signed QB Patrick Mahomes to a 10-year contract extension through 2021.
SAFARI STADIUM — Signed CB Jamal Taylor to a one-year contract.
COLLEGE
GEORGE MASON — Named Duane Simkins men's basketball associate head coach. Named Bryson Johnson and Maurice Joseph men's basketball assistant coaches.
LA SALLE — Named Jamal Robinson men's basketball assistant coach.
MARTIN METHODIST — Named Caleb Chowbay men's basketball assistant coach.

Pro soccer

NWSL Challenge Cup

Herriman Utah
Saturday, June 27
North Carolina Courage 2, Portland Thorns 1
Washington Spirit 2, Chicago Red Stars 1
Tuesday, June 30
Houston Dash 3, Utah Royals 0
OL Reign 0, Sky Blue 0
Wednesday, July 1
Portland Thorns 0, Chicago Red Stars 0
N.C. Courage 2, Washington Spirit 0
Thursday, July 2**1**
Utah Royals 1, Sky Blue 0
Houston Dash 2, OL Reign 0
Friday, July 3
N.C. Courage 1, Chicago Red Stars 0
Portland Thorns 1, Washington Spirit 1
Saturday, July 4
Wednesday's games
Utah Royals vs. OL Reign
Sky Blue vs. Houston Dash
Sunday
Washington Spirit vs. Houston Dash
Chicago Red Stars vs. Utah Royals
Monday, July 13
OL Reign vs. Portland Thorns
Sky Blue vs. North Carolina Courage
Quarterfinals
Friday, July 17-Saturday, July 18
TBD
Semifinals
Wednesday, July 22
TBD
Championship
Sunday, July 26
TBD

NBA



SCOTT R. GALVIN/AP

Former Cleveland Cavaliers guard J.R. Smith had been out of the league for 20 months when the Lakers signed him to play during the team's restart, where he rejoins former teammate LeBron James.

JR Smith, happy to be back in game, lands with Lakers

By GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — JR Smith was not ready to wrap up his 15-year NBA career when he left the Cleveland Cavaliers in late 2018, and the ensuing 20 months were not much fun for the veteran shooter.

"I went through a very depressed state for a long time," Smith said Monday. "I'm a big video gamer, (but) I didn't even play (NBA) 2K anymore. I don't want to hoop, I don't want to work out, I don't want to play 2K, I don't want to do anything with basketball."

Thanks to a call from the Los Angeles Lakers, Smith is getting another shot on basketball's biggest stage. He joined the Western Conference leaders for workouts last week before they headed to Florida for the conclusion of the NBA season.

The 34-year-old Smith was added to the roster because Lakers starter Avery Bradley declined to return for the rest of the season, citing family concerns. The Lakers needed a depth replacement who could immediately fit in alongside LeBron James while playing solid wing defense, providing a three-point threat and meshing quickly as a teammate.

Nobody in recent NBA history fits that job description more perfectly than Smith, who reached four NBA Finals and won the 2016 title while playing alongside James in Cleveland. Known for his ebullient behavior on and off the court, Smith was overjoyed to get back in the show.

"I just want to enjoy every possible moment that I get."

JR Smith

On being back in the NBA, now with the Lakers

"I was gone for a while," Smith said. "Being somebody who has been around the league predominantly for most of their adult life, when that's taken away from you, it kind of gives you that culture shock. You obviously don't understand what you've lost until it's gone. I just want to appreciate the moment for what it is, and whether it be next year or never again, I just want to enjoy every possible moment that I get."

Smith tried out for the Lakers in February when they had another roster spot available, but the team chose veteran Dion Waiters for that slot. Waiters never got to play for Los Angeles before the season was suspended, and now both veterans are headed to Orlando with the Lakers.

Coach Frank Vogel was impressed by the way Smith kept himself in shape despite being without a team for an extended period.

"I think this is really a great story," Vogel said. "When you look at a guy who could potentially be out of the league and was a starter on a Finals team a couple years back, a champion, for him to have the perseverance to stay ready and give himself this opportunity, I think it is to be commended."

It's too soon to tell whether Smith will get significant playing time behind Kentavious

Caldwell-Pope and Alex Caruso, who are likely to fill the majority of Bradley's minutes.

But Smith's particular set of skills is exactly what the Lakers sought — particularly his career 37.3% shooting on three-pointers. With James setting up Anthony Davis as their primary scoring option, the Lakers have plenty of opportunities for well-spaced shooters to get open looks.

"Hey, his nickname is 'Swish' for a reason, right?" Vogel said of Smith. "He's a shot-maker, a big-time shot-maker. I think he's really going to help us."

Smith is also uncommonly familiar with James, and he knows what to do when LeBron's competitiveness ramps up in the post-season. Smith and James have played together for years in the NBA's most difficult situations.

"There's people that are not going to know how to deal with it," Smith said of James' competitiveness. "It comes off in the wrong way sometimes, and you need that bridge as a player to be able to go to the next player and be like, 'Listen man, it's nothing personal. (It's not about) who was right, who was wrong.' It's just a good balance, I think, between myself and him, because he knows just as we can challenge anybody else, I'll challenge him, and vice versa."

NBA's faith in Orlando restart will be tested

By DAN WOIKE
Los Angeles Times

Houston Rockets general manager Daryl Morey is wearing some of the effects of the NBA's shutdown all over his face. With the kind of beard you'd expect to see on someone cast away on a remote island and talking to a volleyball, Morey has his anxieties concerning what's to come for the league.

Teams are making their way to Orlando, Fla., for the NBA restart over a three-day span beginning Tuesday before training camps can begin in preparation for reopening July 30.

Positive tests for COVID-19 continue to register. Some teams have closed their practice facilities. And for people such as Morey, who doesn't know for sure whether 69-year-old Rockets coach Mike D'Antoni will be cleared to participate, it's a critical time.

Still, all things considered, the wild-bearded exec has faith. It's why he'll be on one of those planes.

"I think it would be pretty bad to ask the players to do something that I'm not doing," he said during a Zoom call Monday. "I do feel comfortable that we have the best plan in a tough situation. Does that make the situation perfect? No. But I do think a lot of work has been put into this."

"It's about as safe as you can get."

There are varying levels of trust in the NBA's bubble, but most everyone agrees this is the best the league can do amid the conditions. NBA sources have insisted the plan, while exhaustive, isn't censored and that the league is ready to adjust if necessary.

Between June 23 and 29, 25 players tested positive for the coronavirus. An additional 10 staff members also tested positive. Seven of the 22 teams heading to Orlando have closed their practice facilities after learning of positive tests.

"I think every day there's new info and you have to make the best decision based on that info. As I talk to you right now, I think we're on the right path, on the right plan," Morey said. "But I think every day, there's new information. We'll see what comes in the future. If anyone is certain about anything right now, I think they're making a mistake."

Teams will travel either by chartered plane or bus. All passengers must have tested negative throughout the league's testing. If they have returned a positive test, the passengers must have satis-

By the numbers

25

Players who tested positive for the coronavirus between June 23 and June 29.

7

Teams of the 22 in the restart that have closed practice facilities after hearing of positive tests.

48

Hours teams must quarantine in their hotel rooms after arriving in Orlando, Fla.

SOURCE: Los Angeles Times

fied the league criteria to rejoin their teams. If a passenger is presenting any COVID-19 symptoms or lives with someone who has or recently had the virus or symptoms, they will not be allowed to travel with their teams.

Passengers will be directed to clean their hands before and after the security screening process and will undergo a temperature and symptoms check before boarding. They also will be asked to wear masks for the trip.

On the plane, passengers will be spread out with as many empty seats and rows between them as possible. Food and drinks will all be prepackaged, if there is service.

After landing, two buses and a luggage truck will await a team, with the drivers wearing masks. As the team arrives on campus, everyone must either wash or sanitize their hands.

After checking in, everyone must quarantine in their hotel rooms for up to 48 hours (or until each traveler passes two coronavirus tests more than 24 hours apart).

"Just stretch and watch Netflix," New Orleans Pelicans guard Lonzo Ball said about the quarantine. "There's really not much more you can do — try to get my series in."

NHL/NFL



JASON FRANSON, THE CANADIAN PRESS/TNS

Rogers Place, home of the Edmonton Oilers, will be the hub city for teams in the Western Conference during the qualifying rounds once the NHL season resumes on Aug. 1.

Labor deal: NHL, players agree on date to resume

By JOHN WAWROW
AND STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

The NHL is in position to resume playing in less than a month — with 24 teams in action, all in Canada — and could be on the verge of enjoying labor peace through 2026.

The National Hockey League and the NHL Players' Association on Monday announced a tentative deal on a return-to-play format and a memorandum of understanding on a four-year extension of the collective bargaining agreement.

Should both agreements be ratified, the NHL would proceed immediately to its expanded 24-team playoff format, with play beginning on Aug. 1. Under the plan, training camps would open July 13, with teams traveling to their respective hub cities for exhibition games on July 26.

The hub cities are Toronto and Edmonton, Alberta, for the qualifying round and at least first two playoff rounds, according to a person with direct knowledge of the agreements who spoke with The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because the league and NHLPA have not released this information. For the conference finals and the Stanley Cup Final, the person said, the league is being cautious and allowing itself site flexibility in the event of potential spikes in COVID-19 infections.

Extending the CBA, which was set to expire in September 2022, was considered a necessary step in restarting the season, which was placed on pause in March as

DID YOU KNOW?

If approved, the four-year extension of the collective bargaining agreement could pave the way for NHL players to return to the Olympics. The NHL participated in five consecutive Olympics from 1998-2014 before skipping the 2018 games in South Korea.

SOURCE: Associated Press

a result of the pandemic. The extension covers numerous on- and off-ice issues, including the NHL's potential return to the Olympics, the person said.

If approved, players would be in a position to compete at the Beijing Olympics in 2022 and in Italy four years later. In order for that to happen, the NHL would first have to resolve marketing rights and health insurance, among other issues, with the International Olympic Committee and International Ice Hockey Federation.

The NHL, NHLPA and IIHF had what were called productive talks earlier this year. The NHL participated in five consecutive Olympics from 1998-2014 before skipping 2018 in South Korea.

Financially, the CBA extension would attempt to address the lost revenue stemming from the remainder of the regular season being wiped out and with empty arenas looming for the playoffs.

Players would defer 10% of salaries next season which owners would pay back over three consecutive seasons starting in 2022-23, a second person familiar with the proposed agreement told

The AP. The salary cap will remain at \$81.5 million for at least next season, the person said, also speaking only on the condition of anonymity because the details have not been released.

Escrow payments to owners to even out hockey-related revenue at 50/50 would be capped at 20% next season, with the cap decreasing throughout the deal, the second person said. If owners are still owed money from the players, the CBA would be extended for an additional season. Escrow has been one of the biggest complaints of players in the past several years.

The agreements need two-thirds approval by owners. On the union side, the agreements must first be approved by a majority of the NHLPA's 31-member executive committee before going to a vote to the full membership.

Should the league push ahead, the matchups are already known: The top four teams in each conference (Boston, Tampa Bay, Washington and Philadelphia in the East and St. Louis, Colorado, Vegas and Dallas in the West) play a handful of round-robin games to determine seeding.

Those top seeds then face the winners of eight opening-round, best-of-five series: No. 5 Pittsburgh vs. No. 12 Montreal; No. 6 Carolina vs. No. 11 New York Rangers; No. 7 New York Islanders vs. No. 10 Florida; No. 8 Toronto vs. No. 9 Columbus; No. 5 Edmonton vs. No. 12 Chicago; No. 6 Nashville vs. No. 11 Arizona; No. 7 Vancouver vs. No. 10 Minnesota; and No. 8 Calgary vs. No. 9 Winnipeg.

Payday: Mahomes will be big hit on salary cap

FROM BACK PAGE

Still, Mahomes will take up a big chunk of Kansas City's cap space, around 20 percent depending on the annual contract breakdown and final cap numbers. That could potentially make it difficult for the Chiefs to pay several star players big contracts.

The Chiefs already had picked up their fifth-year option in April on Mahomes, who had been due to make \$825,000 on the final year of his rookie contract this season, to keep him around at least through 2021. General manager Brett Veach said this deal has been a priority for quite a while and thanked Mahomes' agents, Chris Cabott and Leigh Steinberg.

"His abilities are so rare, and to couple that with an incredible personality is outstanding," Veach said of Mahomes. "We're going to continue to do everything we can to surround him with talent, and this deal provides us more flexibility to do that. He's obviously an integral part to our success and we're thrilled he's going to be the quarterback of the Kansas City Chiefs for a long time."

Mahomes threw touchdown passes on consecutive fourth-quarter drives in rallying the Chiefs to their first Super Bowl title in 50 years and the first for coach Andy Reid. That comeback performance earned Mahomes the Super Bowl MVP award and only cemented his status as the face of the Kansas City franchise.

Reid said the best part is that Mahomes is still early in his career. Mahomes won't turn 25 until Sept. 17.

"He's a natural leader and always grinding, whether that's on the field, in the weight room or

watching film, he wants to be the best," Reid said. "He's a competitor and his teammates feed off his energy. He makes us all better as an organization and we are blessed he's going to be our quarterback for years to come."

The Chiefs traded up to select Mahomes 10th overall in the 2017 draft, and he spent one season learning the ropes under Alex Smith before getting the starting job.

Mahomes proceeded to shatter just about every franchise passing record while winning the league MVP award, and he had the Chiefs within overtime of landing in the Super Bowl that season. He also was The Associated Press NFL Offensive Player of the Year.

He dealt with numerous injuries this past season, including a dislocated kneecap on a seemingly innocent quarterback sneak that left him sidelined for a couple of games. He came back to lead the Chiefs to a long winning streak that culminated with a series of come-from-behind wins in the playoffs, including their second-half rally in the Super Bowl.

He is 24 1/2 as a starter, completing 65.9% of his passes with 76 touchdowns and only 18 interceptions. Mahomes is 724-for-1,099 for 9,412 yards passing, averaging 30.6 yards per game with a 108.9 career quarterback rating. He also has run 110 times for 500 yards with four TDs.

He has led the Chiefs to back-to-back AFC championship games. In the postseason, Mahomes is 115-for-184 for 1,474 yards with 13 TDs and only two interceptions with a 106.6 rating.

AP pro football writer Teresa M. Walker contributed to this report.



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

Patrick Mahomes' 10-year extension worth up to \$503 million, surpasses Mike Trout's \$425.5 million deal with Major League Baseball's Los Angeles Angels. It is expected to use up about 20 percent of Kansas City's space under the NFL's salary cap.

MLB



TONY GUTIERREZ/AP

Texas Rangers pitcher Kolby Allard, left, bumps elbows with manager Chris Woodward after Allard was done throwing Monday in an intrasquad game in Arlington, Texas.

Testing concerns overshadow release of 60-game schedules

By BERNIE WILSON
Associated Press

Major League Baseball released its pandemic-shortened schedule Monday, featuring a tantalizing season opener between the New York Yankees and World Series champion Washington Nationals, even as some teams were still bogged down by coronavirus concerns.

By the time MLB revealed each team's 60-game slate Monday evening, the Nationals and Houston Astros — last year's pennant winners — had canceled workouts because of COVID-19 testing delays that one executive worried could endanger the season. The St. Louis Cardinals also scrubbed their practice for the same reason.

"We got camps being shut down and people going three and four days without tests. You just don't know what's going on," Dodgers star Mookie Betts said. "We have to just figure out the right way to do it."

Nick Markakis became the second Atlanta Braves veteran to opt out of the season, swayed by a phone call with teammate Freddie Freeman, who has been stricken with COVID-19.

The Texas Rangers said All-Star slugger Joey Gallo tested positive and is asymptomatic. Arizona Diamondbacks outfielder Kole Calhoun also tested positive but feels good, manager Torey Lovullo said.

Philadelphia Phillies ace Aaron Nola reported to camp after waiting a few extra days because he was in contact with someone who tested positive for the coronavirus.

"All my tests came back negative," Nola said.

The schedule was a bright spot on an otherwise shaky day in baseball's reboot following a shutdown of more than three months. The steady stream of players testing positive and opting out is leading to a growing unease that the full season might not be played.

"Sixty games looks pretty good on paper, but when you go through it day by day, it gets more difficult to kind of see that, the end of the finish line," Minnesota Twins catcher Mitch Garver said.

"There's a ton of players out there quoted saying this, but it almost feels like you're waiting on bad news, right? You're just waiting on somebody's camp to break out. You're waiting for travel restrictions to be shut down across the nation. You're waiting for a second wave, where things become unplayable and sports take a backseat. We're all just kind of going

day-to-day right now, making sure that we're ready for the given day and looking forward to that."

The Nationals and Astros were idled after not receiving test results from Friday. That came a day after Washington reliever Sean Doolittle criticized slow test results and a lack of some personal protective equipment.

"Without accurate and timely testing, it is simply not safe for us to continue with summer camp," Nationals general manager Mike Rizzo said.

"Major League Baseball needs to work quickly to resolve issues with their process and their lab. Otherwise, summer camp and the 2020 season are at risk."

MLB said in a statement that 95% of its intake testing had been completed and the Utah laboratory it's using had reported 98% of results, a majority of those a day after samples were collected. MLB said it addressed delays caused by the holiday weekend, doesn't expect them to continue and commended teams for canceling workouts.

But it's clear that players, managers and coaches have a lot more to worry about than just getting in shape and rounding out rosters.

"You get around the cage and you know you're not supposed to be touching the cage," Marlins manager Don Mattingly said. "You have this mask on all day, which is quite honestly cumbersome when it's hot and you're working. But it's something you get used to. When you're out there and guys are working, it looks exactly the same. You totally forget about it. You can get past it, for sure."

Mattingly said he tries to be as careful as possible before and after workouts: "You go to touch a door and you're like, 'If I can open that without actually having to grab it,' you're trying to do that. That's everywhere now. All the stuff we're having to do everywhere in the world, especially in the South Florida area where it has been rough lately, that's what we're trying to do here."

Testing hasn't been an issue everywhere. "We have not had any, I wouldn't even say hiccups," Cleveland Indians manager Terry Francona said.

Starting off with a bang: Yanks-Nats, Dodgers-Giants

Schedule has two high-profile games July 23

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Mookie Betts, Gerrit Cole and a pair of high-profile matchups are set for opening day as Major League Baseball begins its shortened 60-game season on July 23 in ballparks without fans amid the coronavirus pandemic.

MLB released the schedule Monday, and it starts with two games. Cole and the New York Yankees visit the World Series champion Washington Nationals at 7:08 p.m. EDT, then Betts and his new Los Angeles Dodgers teammates host the San Francisco Giants at 10:08 p.m.

There are 14 games on July 24, including the first matchup at new Globe Life Field in Texas when the Rangers take on Colorado. The same day, Anthony Rendon and the Los Angeles Angels visit Oakland and the Cincinnati Reds host Detroit.

"Seeing the schedule makes it a little more real," Reds manager David Bell said. "We can all start to plan a little better, have an idea what our life is going to be like and where we're going to be the next several months."

"It will make it more realistic: Hey, this is about to happen in just over two weeks now."

The season ends on Sept. 27, with all 30 teams starting their games at 3 p.m. EDT to possibly make for a final-day playoff scramble. Most games this sea-

son, however, are at night.

Teams will play 40 games against their division opponents. The other 20 will be interleague games, including six against a natural opponent, taking on clubs in their corresponding geographic region — East vs. East, for example.

Games planned for London, Mexico City and Puerto Rico already have been canceled.

Among the schedule highlights:

■ The St. Louis Cardinals take on the Chicago White Sox next to the "Field of Dreams" cornfield outside Dyersville, Iowa, on Aug. 13.

■ Jackie Robinson Day, usually celebrated on April 15, will be held Aug. 28 — that's the date the Rev. Martin Luther King led the March on Washington in 1963, and also the date Brooklyn Dodgers owner Branch Rickey talked to Robinson in 1945 about a future in the majors.

■ Roberto Clemente Day will be held Sept. 9.

■ The 100th anniversary of the Negro League will be celebrated on Aug. 16.

■ Oakland pitcher Mike Fiers will get his first look at his former Houston teammates on Aug. 7 at the empty Coliseum. Fiers blew the whistle on the Astros' sign-stealing scam, which dominated baseball talk throughout the winter before the virus shut down the sport.



KATHY WILLEMS/AP

New York Yankees manager Aaron Boone, left, talks to relief pitcher Chad Green after Green pitched part of an intrasquad game Monday at Yankee Stadium. The team opens its season July 23 against the Washington Nationals, the defending World Series champions.

SPORTS



Schedule released
MLB takes another step
toward 60-game season » **Page 23**



GREGORY PAVAN, ABOVE, AND MARK J. TERRILL, RIGHT/AP

Above: Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes scrambles during Super Bowl LIV against the San Francisco 49ers on Feb. 2 in Miami Gardens, Fla. The Chiefs won the game 31-20.
Right: Chiefs coach Andy Reid, left, celebrates with Mahomes, who was named MVP of the game.

Payday

Mahomes gets richest deal in sports history

By ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

The Kansas City Chiefs made sure they'll have Super Bowl MVP Patrick Mahomes around as long as possible.

Mahomes agreed to a 10-year extension worth up to \$503 million, according to his agency, Steinberg Sports. The deal is worth \$477 million in guarantee mechanisms and includes a no-trade clause and opt-out clauses if guarantee mechanisms aren't met.

It's the richest contract in professional sports history, surpassing Mike Trout's \$426.5 million deal with the Los Angeles Angels.

"Since he joined the Chiefs just a few years ago, Patrick has developed into one of the most prolific athletes in all of sports," Chiefs chairman Clark Hunt said in a statement about the quarterback who led them to their first championship in 50 years.

"With his dynamic play and infectious personality, he is one of the most recognized and beloved figures to put on the Chiefs uniform. He's an extraordinary

DID YOU KNOW?

The 10-year extension Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes received is worth up to \$503 million, according to his agency, Steinberg Sports. The deal is worth \$477 million in guarantee mechanisms and includes a no-trade clause and opt-out clauses if guarantee mechanisms aren't met.

SOURCE: Associated Press

leader and a credit to the Kansas City community, and I'm delighted that he will be a member of the Chiefs for many years to come."

The Chiefs had the 2018 NFL MVP under contract for the next two seasons but that wasn't nearly enough.

"Here to stay," Mahomes wrote on Twitter.

The contract extension starts in 2022 when the NFL salary cap is projected to be \$227.5 million. However, that number could be lower depending on revenue losses due to the coronavirus pandemic and the possibility any games played this season won't have fans.

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Glad to be back, Smith lands with Lakers » NBA, Page 21

